ESSENCE OF LIFE

A TRANSLATION OF

"AIN-AL HAYAT"

BY
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Allama Mohammed Baqir Majlisi was a scion of a very erudite family. His ancestor was Maqsood Ali Majlisi who migrated from Jabl Aamil to Isfahan city in Iran. He had two sons, Mohammed Taqi and Mohammed Sadiq. Both of them received instruction in Islamic Studies from allama Abdallah Shustari. Allama Mohammed Taqi Majlisi , himself an erudite Islamic Scholar, was the father of Allama Mohammed Baqir Majlisi. Allama Baqir was born in the year 1037 H (1616AD) . He opened his eyes in a scholarly atmosphere. His two elder brothers, Mulla Azizullah and Mulla Abdallah were scholars of high repute and his sisters too were ladies of high learning. Within no time, the young Mohammed Baqir acquired mastery in logic, philosophy, mathematics, hadith, fiqh, literature and Quranic commentary.

Allama Mohammed Baqir Majlisi's tutors too were of very high repute. Among them were Hassan Ali bin Abdallah, Sayed Mohammed Haidar Tabatabai, Mir Mohammed Momin and Allama Muhsin Faiz.When the scholarly atmosphere honed his capabilities, Mohammed Baqir commenced his authorship. The work that the erudite scholars did in a millennium, Allama Majlisi achieved in a short span of 77 years. It is a fact that what Allama Mohammed Yaqub kulaini commenced, Allama Majlisi took up capably as a rennaisance to his efforts. Bihar Al Anwaar is Allama Majlisi's monumental work consisting of 25 volumes. Mirat al Uqool fi Shara al Kaafi is a commentary on authentic and weak *hadiths.*

Allama Majlisi had hundreds of disciples studying under him. His prominent students were Allama Sayed Nematullah jazairi, Mirza Abdallah Effendi, Mulla Abdallah Ardbeli, Mulla Mohammed Fazil, Mulla Mohammed bin Hassan Isfahani and Mulla Mohammed Hussain bin Yahya Noori.

This great luminary of Islamic learning passed away at the age of 77 years in 1111H (1690 A.D.).

CHAPTER : 1

PROFILES OF THE BENEVOLENT COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET (A.S.)

HAZRAT ABU DHARR:

Abu Dharr was his patronym and the given name was Jundab bin Junada. He belonged to the tribe of Bani Ghaffar of Arabia. There are recorded traditions to prove that after the Infallibles of the Prophet's Family, the most exalted amongst the companions were Salman, Abu Dharr and Miqdad. The traditions of the Holy Ahle Baith bear witness that after the demise of the Holy Prophet (A.S.), most of the companions turned apostate. But Salman, Abu Dharr and Miqdad were amongst the small group of steadfastly dedicated followers of the Prophet (A.S.) and his family. It is another matter that many of the apostates came to the right path later on and owed allegiance to Hazrat Ali ibne Abi Talib.(A.S.)

THE QUALITIES OF SALMAN, ABU DHARR AND MIQDAD :

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (A.S.) says that Ameer al Momineen, Ali (A.S.), said to Salman, " O Salman ! Call at the door of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, to give to you a portion of the gift that she has received from the *Janna* {the Heaven}.Salman went to the door and made his request. The Lady said, ' three Houris came from the Heaven and brought gifts in three containers. One Houri, whose name was Salma, said that Allah has created her for Salman, the second Houri said that she was Zara and was earmarked for Abu Dharr and the third was named Maqdooda and was created for Miqdad !'

After this conversation Hazrat Fatima (A.S.) gave to Salman a portion of the gift received from the Heaven. The material was so fragrant that wherever he went with it, the people asked him what material he was carrying that similar fragrance they had never experienced in their lives. Reliable books of both the Schools have it on record that the Prophet (A.S) has said that there is none more truthful than Abu Dharr on the earth and under the sky!

One person expressed his doubt to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (A.S) about this Tradition that Abu Dharr couldn't possibly be more truthful than Hazrat Ali ibne Abi Talib (A.S).

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (A.S.) asked the person if he was aware when and under what circumstance the Prophet (A.S.) made this remark about Abu Dharr ?

When the man replied in negative, the Imam (A.S.) said, " Some persons went to the Prophet (A.S) and complained that Abu Dharr was attributing incomprehensible phenomena to Hazrat Ali ibne Abi Talib (A.S.). At this point the Holy Prophet (A.S.) mentioned about the truthfulness of Abu Dharr"
Imam Jafar e Sadiq (A.S.) also told to the person that comparisons between the Infallible and the fallible persons should not be made.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (A.S.) has also said that once, when Abu Dhar reached the presence of the Prophet (A.S.), he found him deeply engrossed in conversation with Wahia Kalabi, another companion. Abu Dharr quietly walked away intending not to disturb the conversation. In fact it was the Angel Gabriel in the guise of Wahia Kalabi who was visiting the Prophet (A.S.). Gabriel expressed his surprise that Abu Dharr went away without greeting the Prophet (A.S.). He also mentioned that one of the supplications of Abu Dharr was a topic of discussion amongst the angels in the Heaven. When Gabriel took leave and Abu Dharr visited the Prophet (A.S.), the Prophet (A.S.) said, " O Abu Dharr! Why did you go away so quietly even without greeting me!" Abu Dharr replied, " O Hazrat! I found you so engrossed in conversation with Wahia Kalabi that I thought you were discussing some confidential matters and it was not discreet to disturb your talk." The Prophet (A.S.) asked Abu Dharr, " Recount to me the supplication which you recite regularly. The Angel Gabriel, who was with me in the guise of Wahia Kalabi, told me that Abu Dharr walked away without greeting me and and also mentioned that his supplication is the matter of discussion amongst the angels in the Heaven!"

Hearing this, Abu Dharr recited the following supplication:

"*Allahumma inni asalokal eemana beka wattasdeeq benabieka wal aafiata min jami al bala walshukr alalaafia wal ghani an sahar al naas."*

A reliable tradition of the Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) mentions that after the passing away of the Prophet (a.s.) it is obligatory on the followers of the Faith to love the Companions who steadfastly followed the religion without any dissent or innovation. Amongst these steadfast persons were Salman Farsi, Abu Dharr Ghiffari, Miqdad bin Aswad Kindi, Ammar bin Yassir, Jabir bin Abdallah Ansari, Abdallah bin Samit, Ibada bin Samit, Abu Ayoob Ansari, Hudhaifa bin al Eeman, Abul Hasheem, Sahl bin Haneef, Khazeema bin Sabit, Abu Saeed Khadri etc.

Ibne Babawia narrates from Abdallah ibne Abbas that one day the Prophet (a.s.) was sitting in the Quba Mosque with his Companions. He said, " The first person who enters the door of the Mosque will be destined for the Heaven." Hearing this, some companions got up to leave and grasp the privilege of entering the mosque first. The Prophet added, " many persons will enter this mosque and everyone will try to preempt the others, but the one amongst them who informs about the ending of the month of *Azur* will be destined for the Heaven!"

Abu Dharr entered the Mosque along with the other persons. The Prophet (a.s.) asked the gathering about the current month of the Roman Calender. Abu Dharr replied that it was the end of the month of *Azur*. The Prophet (a.sa.) said that he was aware of the fact but he wished to impress on the gathering that Abu Dharr was destined for the Heaven. The Prophet (a.s.) further added that this Heavenly person will be banished by the people because of his profound love for my family and that he would spend the rest of his life in a desolate place and die a lonely and hapless death! The people of Iraq would give him a burial taking pity on him. These persons too will be in the Heaven that has been promised by Allah to the benevolent.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) also said that there are ten stages of faith. He added that Salman was on the tenth stage, Abu Dharr on the ninth, and Miqdad on the eighth stage!

ABU DHARR ACCEPTS ISLAM

Mohammed bin Yaqoob Kulaini narrates that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) told to a person about the manner in which Salman and Abu Dharr accepted Islam. He further said that one day Abu Dharr was grazing his sheep in his hamlet, Marka, which is situated near Mecca. While the sheep were grazing a wolf attacked them and Abu Dharr scared it away with his staff. The wolf repeated its attempt to attack the sheep when Abu Dharr ran after it shouting, "you cruel creature! Why are you not running away!" The wolf miraculously uttered," Am I cruel or the people of Mecca who are perpetrating cruelty after cruelty on the Propet (a.s.)!"

Abu Dharr, when he heard this from the dumb animal, started to walk towards Mecca. When he reached Mecca it was very hot there and he was uneasy with acute thirst. He drew some water from the spring of Zam Zam. To his surprise Abu Dharr found that the container was having milk instead of water. He drank it, quenched his thirst, and understood that this was the first miracle of the truth of Allah's Prophet (a.s.) that he was experiencing. When he proceeded towards the compound of the Kaba he found some people talking irreverently about the Prophet (a.s) of Allah. At this juncture arrived a person and noticing him the group got scared and became quiet. When the person started to leave the place, Abu Dharr too followed him. Catching up with the person Abu Dharr asked, "Who are you?" He replied," I am Abu Talib, the chief of Mecca. Have you any work with me?" Abu Dharr said," I wish to meet the Prophet of Allah (a.s) to accept Islam." Hazrat Abu Talib said," Tomorrow you can come with me to meet him at the same time as now." The next day Abu Dharr reached the place at the appointed time, Hazrat Abu Talib joined him and they both proceeded to meet the Prophet (a.s).

Abu Dharr says that Hazrat Abu Talib took him to a house where Hazrat Hamza was present. He greeted him and Hazrat Hamza returned his greeting and inquired about the purpose of his visit. When Abu Dharr informed to him the purpose of his visit, Hazrat Hamza said that there is one God, *Allah,* and Mohammed (a.s) is his Prophet. Abu Dharr rejoined bearing witness that there is no god but Allah and Mohammed (a.s.) is his Prophet (*la ilaha ill Allah Mohammad ur rasool Allah).* Then Hazrat Hamza took him to another house where Hazrat Jafar was there. He too asked Abu Dharr the same questions and was given similar replies. Then Hazrat Jafar Tayyar took Abu Dharr to the house of Hazrat Ali ibne Abu Talib (a.s.). There too Abu Dharr bore witness about Allah and his Prophet (a.s.) thrice.

Now Hazrat Ali (a.s.) took Abu Dharr to the presence of the Prophet (a.s). He greeted the Prophet (a.s.) who kindly asked him to sit and bear witness to the unity of Allah and that Mohammed (a.s.) is Allah's Prophet. Now the Prophet (a.s.) said, " O Abu Dharr! You must immediately return to your place that your paternal cousin has expired and you are the soul inheritor of his estate. Go home and take charge of the affairs of your estate. You must join us when we summon you." Therefore after the migration (*Hegira)* Abu Dharr had the honour of meeting the Prophet (a.s.) in Medina.

SALMAN ACCEPTS ISLAM

Hazrat Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that some companions visited the grave of the Prophet (a.s.) one day and were busy conversing with each other. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked Salman Farsi,“ O Salman! How did you accept the Faith of Islam?” Salman replied,“ O Ameer al Momineen! Since it is obligatory on me to reply to your queries, I am narrating to you the circumstances under which I accepted the Faith. I am a native of the city of Shiraz and my profession was farming. My parents used to love me very much. One day when I visited a hermitage along with them I heard a sound as if someone was saying there is no God but Allah, Isa (a.s.) is the Spirit of Allah and Mohammed (a.s.) is the Prophet of Allah (*la ilaha il Allah Isa Rooh Allah Mohammed Rasool Allah).* These words had such profound effect on me that the love of the Prophet (a.s.) got embedded in my entire existence. I instantly abandoned my ancestral belief of worshipping the sun. Hearing this my father got very angry on me and he incarcerated me in a deep well. I was held there for a very long time during which I used to pray to Allah for my deliverance.

One day an old person dressed in a white robe arrived and releasing me from the well took me to a hermit. I expressed to the hermit about my faith. He was very kind to me but one day he told me that he would expire on the following morn. I asked him,‘ Then what should I do and where should I go to?’ The hermit mentioned to me the name of another hermit and his location. He asked me to give his reference when I met the other hermit. I therefore went there and spent quite a while with the hermit till he too expired. After the hermit’s death I continued to live with the other inmates of the hermitage. Those people were in the habit of taking wines with the food and insisted on my partaking of it. When I refused to comply they got angry on me and sold me as a slave to a Jew. This Jew also inflicted lot of hardships on me. In the end he sold me to a lady by the name of Salimia. The lady had an orchard and I was assigned to water the trees. The lady was very satisfied and happy with my work.

One day a group of persons entered the garden. They were having a cloud hovering over their heads. In the group there was the Prophet (a.s.), Hazrat Ali A.s.), Hamza, Zaid bin Haritha, Hazrat Aqeel, Abu Dharr and Miqdad. I thought that the cloud following a person is the sign of the Prophet (a.s.). But all of them couldn’t possibly be Prophets. Definitely one of them must be the Prophet (a.s.). I was wondering about this when the Prophet (a.s.) called meup and pushing aside his robe showed to me the Seal of Prophet-hood on his back. I instantly fell on his feet but he raised me up with great affection.

Now the Prophet (a.s.) told to Salimia that he wished to buy me from her. She asked for four hundred date palms in exchange for me and said that out of these two hundred should have yellow dates and the other two hundred red dates. The Prophet accepted this deal and asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to gather four hundred seeds of dates. When Hazrat Ali (a.s.) completed the task, the Prophet (a.s.) started sowing them and Hazrat Ali (a.s.) went after him watering the planted seeds. As the Prophet (a.s.) sowed the next seed, a full-grown plant emerged from the first laden with fruits. Now, the four hundred date palms were ready, two hundred bearing yellow and the other two hundred bearing the red fruits.

When Salimia saw that her wish had been fulfilled she came up with another condition that she wanted all the palms to bear yellow fruits. Therefore, with Allah's wish Gabriel came and with the touch of his wings, he turned all the palms to bear yellow dates. Now Salimia had perforce to part with Salman. Then the Prophet (a.s.) released Salman and said, "O Rozba! From this day we give you the name of Salman."

ABU DHARR- THE OPPRESSED

Ali bin Ibrahim narrates that during the battle of Tabook Abu Dharr fell behind the troops because his camel was weak and emaciated. Abu Dharr abandoned the camel and carrying his luggage on his back proceeded onwards. When he reached near the group, the people informed the Prophet (a.s.) that someone was seen approaching them from a distance. The Prophet (a.s.) said, " This is Abu Dharr. Fetch water for him that he might be very thirsty." When Abu Dharr reached the group, his thirst was quenched. Abu Dharr then took out a pitcher full of water from his luggage and presented to the Prophet (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) asked, "O Abu Dharr! Despite having water with you, you preferred to remain thirsty. What is the reason for this?" Abu Dharr politely replied, " I had obtained this water from a cistern on the way. The water was very sweet and cold. I thought that I must present this water to my Master instead of consuming it myself." The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " O Abu Dharr! May Allah be kind to you. You must be patient in your lonely journey, lonely death, poverty and helplessness. A group of God fearing persons will perform your last rites and Allah will give you entry to the Heaven." Reliable histories are witness that during the Second Caliphate Abu Dharr was banished to Syria. There, Abu Dharr started publicly criticizing Emir of Syria for his actions, which were contrary to the norms of Islam. He also continued to eulogize Hazrat Ali (a.s.) in public. In the mean time the third caliph assumed power when the Emir of Syria (Muawiah) wrote to him complaining about Abu Dharr. He also mentioned in his letter that Abu Dharr was critical even of the Caliph. Orders were passed that Abu Dharr be sent to the capital expressly.

In consequence the thoughtless Emir dispatched this great companion of the Prophet (a.s.) tied on to the naked back of a camel. Abu Dharr arrived at the court of the Caliph in an emaciated condition and was the recipient of the following reprimand from the Caliph, "why O Abu Dharr! You are making false allegations against us and praising Ali ibne Abu Talib (a.s.)?" Abu Dharr recited a long verse from the Holy Quran, the gist of which is that Allah will consign the disobedient persons to the Hell and they should also be warned that Allah is not unmindful of their deeds. The Caliph rejoined in a furious tone, " O Abu Dharr! Now you have so much courage that you are confronting me! What is the act that I have committed against the dictates of Allah and the Prophet (a.s.)?" Abu Dharr said, " Don't you remember one evening the two of us went to the presence of the Holy Prophet (a.s.) when we noticed that he was very sad and pensive. When we again went to his presence the next morning we found him very happy and pleasant. When we asked him to relate to us the reason for his changing moods, the Prophet said ' Yesterday the treasury (*Baith al Maal)* had four Dhirams. I was concerned that the amount was the

share of some deserving person and it had remained undistributed. Today the amount has been given to the deserving. I am now satisfied that the amount has been disbursed.'

" O Caliph of the time! Today you are hoarding 100,000 Dirhams in the *Baith al Maal* and are looking for arrival of another 100,000 that you can bestow favours on your kin." Someone said," Abu Dharr is a liar and the Verses he has quoted are never concerning you (The Third Caliph)". Therefore Hazrat Ali (a.s.) was called to arbitrate. The Caliph related to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) what had transpired between the parties and asked his opinion whether Abu Dharr was telling a falsehood?

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " Have fear of Allah! I have myself heard the Prophet (a.s.) say that there is none more truthful than Abu Dharr on the land and under the sky!"

Abu Dharr cried and said," It is a pity that you are greedy for wealth and call me a liar. You presume that I have uttered a falsehood concerning the Prophet (a.s.). I am a better person than all of you." Hazrat Othman asked Abu Dharr," How you feel that you are a better person than us?" He replied, " From the day I was separated from my Master (the Prophet) I am wearing the same robe. I have not sold my Faith for the worldly pleasures. To the contrary, you have compromised your Faith for your selfish ends. You have created innovations and squandered Allah's bounty. You shall have to face retribution on the Day of Judgement for your acts!" Othman said tersely," I shall ask you certain questions under oath!" Abu Dharr replied," I shall respond to all your questions, whether under an oath or not."

> Othman took Abu Dharr into privacy and said angrily, " Look! Because you happen to be a companion of the Prophet (a.s.) I cannot get you executed. But I can definitely banish you. Tell me which town you prefer to live in" Abu Dharr replied, " Mecca, which is the place of birth of the Holy Prophet (a.s.)!" Othman asked, " Which is the place you don't like?" Abu Dharr replied, " Rabza!" Orders were then issued that Abu Dharr be exiled to Rabza and that none should accompany him to the place. But Mohammed Yaqub Kulaini writes that at the time of the departure of Abu Dharr from Medina, Hazrat Ali (a.s.), Hazrat Hussain (a.s.), Hazrat Hassan (a.s.), Hazrat Aqeel and Ammar went for some distance with him and advised him to be patient. Imam Hussain (a.s.) told him," O Uncle! The enemy wanted to deprive you of your Faith, but he didn't succeed! But in the bargain he has lost his own Faith. Allah shall reward you in abundance!"
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> Abu Dharr Ghiffari reached Rabza, and lived a lonely existence. He had neither friend nor helper. He had a few sheep in the beginning that died in time. His sons succumbed to the harsh environment of the place and his wife too died. Only one daughter remained with him. For three long days Abu Dharr remained without any food or sustenance in the desert. He put his head on a mound of sand and expired. Only his four-year-old daughter remained. The child started crying and shouting for help when a caravan of men arrived there. The girl recalling her father's last wish told to the new arrivals," O travelers! The companion of the

Prophet (a.s.) has died and his body is lying for two days without a shroud and grave!”

The daughter of Abu Dharr says that she remained near the grave of her father and continued to offer prayers and fasting, as did the father. She witnessed in her dream one night that Abu Dharr was reciting the Holy Quran in his nightly prayers. She asked him,“ O father! How has Allah treated you?” He replied,“ My daughter! I have arrived in the presence of my Allah. He is happy with me and I am contented. He has given me many bounties. O daughter! Do good deeds and don’t let pride overwhelm you.”

The history of Asam Koofi records that the persons who attended the burial of Abu Dharr were Ahnaf bin Qais Tamimi, Saasa bin Sauhan Abdi, Kharja bin Salat Tamimi, Abdallah bin Muslim Tamimi, Bilal bin Malik Muzni, Jareer bin Abdallah Bijli, Aswad bin Yazid al Naqhi, Alqama bin Qais al Naqhi and Malik e Ashtar.

Ibne Abdul Birr writes in his book, *Al Istiaab,* that Abu Dharr died in 31 or 32H and that Abdallah bin Masood performed his funeral prayer.

The group that attended the last rites of Abu Dharr consisted of the companions of the Holy Prophet (a.s). The chief of the caravan was Malik e Ashtar. Hearing the wails of the little girl, he couldn’t control himself crying. He reached the body of Abu Dharr and recited a requiem. Malik e Ashtar was carrying with him a shroud that he had bought for 4,000 Dhirams. He draped the shroud on the body of Abu Dharr for burial. The gathering raised their hands towards the Heaven and said, “ O Allah! This was your good creature! He was a beloved companion of Your Prophet (a.s.)! Bless him in the name of Mohammed (a.s.) and his holy Progeny! Punish those who have inflicted hardships on this gentle soul!” The entire gathering said, “ Aameen!”

THE PROPHET’S WILL CONCERNING ABU DHARR

Sheik Abu Ali Tabarsi writes in his book, *Makarim al Akhlaq,* and several other reliable sources relate that when Abu Asad Deelmi went to Rabza to meet Abu Dharr, he told him that when one early morning he entered the Prophet’s Mosques in Medina none other was present with the Prophet (a.s.) except for a copy of the

Holy Quran and a *hamael* (a miniature compilation of the Holy Book). Being alone with the Holy Prophet (a.s.), he took courage in his hands to ask him," O Lord of the Universe! Kindly give me such advice that it is advantageous to me in both the worlds."

The Prophet (a.s.) looked at him intently and said, " Abu Dharr! For us you are a member of our family! In my eyes you are a chosen creation of Allah. Listen, and listen with care, remember and act on my advice. " O Abu Dharr! Worship Allah as if you are seeing Him! And if you cannot see Him, then definitely He sees you!'"

This tradition of the Prophet (a.s.) is the comprehensive utterance of the Prophet (a.s.) that might require volumes to explain and elucidate. We are trying to dwell on the subject briefly in the steps dealt with in the following chapter. My humble effort may not measure up to the comprehension of the eloquence of the Great Personality, but it is my duty to make an effort. Insha Allah!

CHAPTER 2
THE STEPS

STEP 1

THE MEANING OF THE SIGHTING OF THE EXALTED CREATOR

In the tradition sighted at the end of the previous chapter there has been stress on the sighting of the Exalted Creator. We must know that the sighting is of two types, namely, 1) sighting with the eyes and 2) sighting with the heart. In the view of the devout persons sighting through the heart is more important than sighting with the eyes. It must be your experience that many a time the eye can make a mistake about the object sighted. For example from a fast moving carriage one gets the illusion that the trees are fast running in the opposite direction. This, as you know, is contrary to the fact. But, in the case of sighting through the heart there will not be any element of error.

Someone asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.) if he has sighted Allah whom he worshipped. He replied," If I had not seen Him, I would never have worshipped Him. But I have not seen Allah with these eyes because they have no such faculty. I have witnessed Allah with the eyes of my heart and the firmness of my Faith in Him."

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) was asked by someone,“ O son of the Prophet! How to create *khuzu wa khushu* (humility and fear of Allah) in prayer?”
The Imam (a.s.) replied,” During prayer keep your eyes focussed on the point where you prostrate with your forehead.”
Again someone asked the Imam (a.s.) the same question and he told him that during the prayer he should have the thought in his mind that he might die immediately after the prayer.

After some more days another person asked the Imam the same question. The Imam said that during the prayer the person should concentrate on the thought that he is witnessing Allah; but since Allah does not have any physical appearance, He cannot be seen with the eyes. The thought must be there during the prayer that Allah is looking at the worshipper.

A thought comes to the mind that the Holy Imam (a.s.), instead of giving three different replies, could have given only one reply, which he thought was the best. But this thinking is wrong. As a matter of fact, the Imam was replying to every individual keeping his capability in mind. The reply given to the third and the last person is for the knowledgeable, and the most knowledgeable are the Infallible members of the Prophet’s progeny. They are on record praying to Allah thus, “ We have not been able to justify Your Mystic knowledge.(*ma arafnak haq marafatak)*

STEP 2
THE REASON FOR CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

There are numerous verses of the Holy Quran and several traditions of the Prophet (a.s.) and the Imams that illustrate that the purpose of the creation of the universe, and all the creatures living in it, is for the sole purpose of worshipping the Creator, Allah. We should know that prayer and knowledge of Allah have to be compulsorily together. Without knowledge of Allah prayer is futile and without prayer any claims of knowledge of Allah are not of any use. There are certain conditions that are the very spirit of prayer, for example humility, fear of Allah and dedication of the heart. If these things are not there then the prayer is not of much use. These things prevent the worshipper from undesirable acts. If the prayer is not implicitly in accordance with the established norms, then it can, at best, be termed as praying just out of habit.

For the acceptance of our prayers we have to consider whether it is preventing us from the undesirable acts of the daily life. If this is not the case, we are not fulfilling the very purpose of the Creator prescribing prayer for the human kind. The prayer of such persons will be hypocritical, tantamount to going through the ritual for making a show in the social environment.

STEP 3
THE CONDITIONS FOR PRAYER

Going into the details of the steps of prayer is not in the purview of this book. But briefly, the most important aspect of prayer is the intent of the worshipper who offers prayer. The Prophet (a.s.) has said, " the actions of a person depend on his intentions (*innamal aamal bil niyaat)"*

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," the intent of a pious person is better than his actions." The intent in which there is no desire for nearness is useless and the nearness without intent too is not of much use. Here the nearness is not meant to be the physical nearness but the nearness of spirit. One should know that physical nearness with Allah is impossible because He is devoid of any physical existence. However pure the intent for prayer there is no other intent in the act than the nearness to the Creator. For example the people in the community start considering a pretender very pious because a rich person got impressed with his prayers and gave him material benefits.

The translator here recalls the story of a thief who planned to burgle the palace of the king. He climbed the roof of the palace and sat looking for a chance to get into the boudoir of the queen. He was waiting for the king and the queen to fall asleep. During this time he heard the queen and the king converse. The queen told to the king that Allah has granted to them a pretty daughter who has now reached the age of the marriage. The king said that he too was looking for a pious person to be the consort for his daughter. The queen said it might not be a difficult task to find such a person. She suggested that the vizier should go to the mosque early morning and the first young person who arrived there should be the best choice. She said that they should get their daughter married to that person because they didn't need to search a person with riches. The king liked this idea very much and issued suitable instructions to the vizier. The thief heard all this and saw a wonderful opportunity for himself. He quietly descended from the roof of the palace and reached the mosque carefully to be the first person entering there. The vizier brought him to the court. The king ordered the young man to be given a shower and robed in royal finery. The king also declared that the princess will be married to him and he would get half the kingdom as a dowry. The king asked the young man if he was willing to accept the proposal. At this juncture the young man got the idea that for falsely assuming piety he was getting half of the kingdom. If he became a true worshipper of Allah the bounties could be unimaginable. Therefore the young man refused the offer of the king. He told him that Allah, who has given him half the kingdom, might give him much more. The king hugged the young man and said, " Alright! I have given you the entire kingdom"

Therefore, it is imperative that there has to be honesty of purpose in prayer. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " The people who pray with the desire of entering the Heaven, their devotion is commercial; and those who offer prayers with the fear of going to the Hell, their attitude is slavish. The third category is of persons, who offer prayers to Allah with

the awareness that they owe devotion to Him and are the selfless worshippers. I too offer prayers to Allah because He is the true Lord deserving of worship. His blessings and gifts are of such magnitude that offering Him thanks would not be possible even if every cell gets a tongue."

Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) was told by Allah, " O Moosa (a.s.) ! Create My love in the hearts of your people!"

Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) replied, " O Creator! I love you profoundly, but how can I create Your love in others' hearts?"

The reply was, " Mention to them the Blessings showered by Me on them. They will automatically develop love for Me!"

The Holy Prophet (a.s.) said, " O people! Love Allah for His countless bounties, Love me because of Allah and because of me love my *Ahl al Bayt*!"

The purport of *Innamal aamaal bil niyaat* (Actions are in accordance to the intents) is that the actions should purely be for the sake of Allah. The 'intent' which is from the depth of the heart is better than the action. Some people wrongly assume that when they utter their desire to perform ablution or the bath of purification, they have expressed their intent to do so. What is important is the sincerity in the action. The following example shall illustrate the point. There is a person who habitually misses his mandatory prayers. But an occasion comes when he accompanies a rich person, from whom he expects a favor, to a mosque. To please the rich man he performs ablution and joins the congregation. Although his intent was to pray, his prayer is not right, because his intention was to receive the largesse and not to get Allah's Pleasure!

There are two distinct types of intents. The one is an easy intent and the other is difficult.

The first easy intent is one which comes to mind but the person does not perform the act purposely. For example, a person enters the washroom with the intent of performing the ritual purification bath, forgets about it and takes a shower without going through the steps of the ritual bath. The person thus would not have purified himself, although the intent was there.

The difficult intent is one where a person is fully aware of the purpose and need for the action. He knows the dictates of the wisdom and religious norms for the act. For example, : a person is first asked as to where he is going. He says that he intends to go to the bazar. . This will be his first intention. Then he is asked as to why he is going to the bazar. He mentions about the things he intends to buy. That will be his second intention.

There are a few stages of intent:

In this world every individual has certain wishes and desires. Some are after hoarding wealth under the influence of the Satan, others face any amount of hardship to get their beloved. These hardships are pleasurable for them. Even if they are told that prayer would bring to them Bounties in the Hereafter, they would not pay any heed. For the person who is running after acquiring wealth, his deity is the wealth. Similarly a person who wants to have name and fame, limits his prayers to craving for these things.

During the time of the Prophet there was a good mix of godliness and worldliness in the people. But soon after the Prophet, a clear demarcation came about between the godly and the worldly-wise people. The worldly-wise joined hands with the rulers of the day and the pious were few and far between.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that the Prophet (a.s.) said, " abstain from hypocrisy, because hypocrisy is like polytheism (*Shirk)*.The hypocrite will be addressed with four names on the Day of Reckoning: unbeliever, characterless, deceit, adulterer. He will be told that his actions will earn him retribution and all his prayers would have gone in vain. He will be asked to seek the wages and return for his efforts from the one he was working for (*the Satan)*"

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) narrates that the prophet of Islam (a.s.) said that on the Day of Reckoning Allah would order consigning of one group of people to the Hell. The Keeper of the Hell will instruct the Hell Fire not to burn the feet of the people because they used to enter the Mosque using them. He will caution the fire not to scorch their faces that they used to do the ablution of their faces for the prayers. He would also ask the fire to spare their hands that they used to raise them in supplication to Allah. He would not have their tongues burnt that they used to recite the Holy Book with their help!.

Then the Keeper of the Hell would ask the sinners, " O cruel ones! What sins you have committed that despite everything you have been judged deserving of punishment in the Hell?"

The group would respond saying, " All our actions were to please others than Allah. This is the reason that we are asked today to seek succor from those in whose service we spent our lives."

Hazrat Luqman (a.s.) advised his son that hypocrites can be recognized with three characteristics: while alone, they are tardy about prayers: when in congregation they pretend to be ardently keen on offering prayers and in every activity they seek more and more approbation from others.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates from the Prophet (a.s.) He said, " The person who offers prayers to show-off to others is a polytheist (*mushrik)*. The person who performs Haj to impress others is a *mushrik* and one who fasts to attract others' attention too is a *mushrik. One who pays the tithe (* the Zakat) to impress others and pretends to follow all the Commandments of Allah hypocritically too is a *mushrik.* Allah doesn't accept any acts of the hypocrites."

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ Every hypocrisy is polytheism. Whatever deed is done with the purpose of showing to others is hypocrisy. The wages for the deeds too will be disbursed by the one for whom the deed was performed.”

The Imam (a.s.) further said, “ The good deed done by a pious person, however small, Allah will manifest it to others in greater measure. However much the perpetrator of evil tries to hide his deed from others, Allah will disclose it to others sooner or later.”
The cure for hypocrisy and cunning is the banishing of evil thoughts from the mind and controlling the desires for undue worldly benefits. The person should think that this world is transitory and nothing is permanent here. He has only to pray for and seek the goodwill and nearness of the Immortal and Infallible Allah. .

It is said that a person was squatting near a tree remembering Allah. He wished to do his meditation with complete peace of mind when a group of birds perched on the tree and started chirping. The peace of mind of the person was disturbed and he scared the birds away. After a while of peace the birds again gathered on the canopy of the tree and started making noise. He scared them away once again. But the birds were coming back again and again. Another person was passing by and he observed the activity of the first person. He said,” Brother! As long as the tree is there, the birds would perch on it and chirp! Why don’t you cut away the tree?” The man did accordingly. He got rid of the chirping birds. Similarly, as long as there are present in the hearts of humans the trees of the love of worldly gains, the birds of desire will be there to chirp and there will not be peace of mind for prayer and supplication. Therefore, one should shun the worldly desires, concentrate on the bounties that Allah has given him. The bounties of Allah are uncountable and there won’t be an end thanking Him for His Grace. The biggest Divine Blessing is the existence of the human being. Allah has blessed man with limbs, sense and strength. He has created the land, the skies, the sun, the moon, the stars, the animals and birds for the benefit of man. He has created different climates, flora and fauna for the good of man. Allah has not deprived even the unbelievers from the benefits of His bounties in this world. But man continues to give the proof of his ungratefulness. He bows down shamelessly and thoughtlessly to his own self-created gods.

Imam Reza (a.s.) says, “ If Allah had not promised Heaven and had not created the fear of the Hell, even then prayer would have been obligatory on humankind. Because Allah is the provider of all the Bounties before and after the creation of man in this world.”

There are stages of prayer: In the grade of sincere worshippers there is a group of people who offer prayer in their modesty. These are the people whose hearts are shining with the light of Faith. They believe that Allah is Omniscient and keeps track of all our actions. Therefore, they never commit any act contrary to His Dictates. They are shy of committing the smallest act tantamount to His Disobedience. They firmly believe that Allah is Omnipresent.

Hazrat Luqman told to his son, “ If you wish to be disobedient to Allah, search a place where He isn’t there!”

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said, “ Have fear of Allah the best you could!”

Some of the companions asked, “ How could we have the fear of Allah ?”

The Prophet (a.s.) replied, “ If you wish to have fear of Allah, always keep your death in mind and keep all your senses free of sins against Allah. Take care to eat legitimate (*Halal*) food and tell the truth. Also you must remember that your destiny is to go to the grave and the dust.”

The people who have comprehended the pleasure of prayer, their minds and consciences will be pure and bright and all the worldly desires would have vanished from the mirror of their hearts. They don’t give priority to any desires over their duties of obedience and worship of Allah. For them there is no pain more than the pain of committing sin against Allah. They have totally comprehended the harm accompanying sin. They associate Heaven with prayer and supplication and Hell with sin. They get so much pleasure from prayers that they become unmindful of the worldly pleasures! Every drop of tear that issues forth from their eyes in prayer, gives immense pleasure to their hearts. The tears that come from their eyes in fear of Allah, give them the pleasure of having Allah’s Fear.

The Prophet (a.s.) has said, “ The noblest person is one who loves to pray. His heart is full of Allah’s love. His limbs and other parts are obedient to the Will of Allah. For prayer he would abandon worldly activities and he would be oblivious of the comforts of life. He would be totally dedicated to prayer of Allah without giving any thought to earning a place in the Heaven.”

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that Allah says, “ O my worshippers! Derive benefit from prayers in the world, as you would in the Hereafter. As there are the five senses in the bodies of humans, with whose help they feel things, their spirits too have faculties of senses. The spirits derive the truths and meanings through their use. As the bodily senses keep them away from wrong- doing, so do the spiritual senses prevent them from committing sins.. People with good taste distinguish between good taste or otherwise. But when a person falls ill, even sweet things taste bitter to him. In such a condition the person loses his confidence on his faculty of taste. Similarly, as long as the spiritual senses of a person are not dominated by carnal desires, he will be busy in prayer and supplication. But once the negative desires gain ascendance over him, he starts feeling that good deeds are bitter for him. He refrains from prayer and starts indulging in sinful acts. . In his eyes, now, the evil appear good and the good appear evil.”

Allah observes about the Infallible of the Family of the Prophet (*the Ahl al Bayt*) thus, “ Allah is friendly towards them, and they are friendly towards Allah.” They are such worshippers of Allah that even if they are in the Heaven and they don’t have the Pleasure of Allah, then the Heaven would be worse than the Hell for them. And if they are in the Hell and have the love of Allah, then the fire of the Hell will be like flowers for them.

Therefore Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) thought that the fire of Nimrod, to which the tyrant consigned him, was a bed of flowers. If Allah had not thought it fit to change the fire into flowers, Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) would have accepted it without a whimper of complaint.

Let's take the example of an ordinary mortal. In his worldly love for the beloved he would go to any extent to please. He would undergo any amount of hardship willingly for the sake of the loved one. Wherever he goes, whatever he does, the sole aim is to please the beloved. But when a person gets to love Allah, he rises above the concept of the Heaven and the Hell. The biggest thing in his eyes now will be to have the pleasure of Allah. He likes the Heaven because he thinks that Allah likes it and wishes to be away from the Hell that he thinks Allah doesn't like the Hell.

Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) has said, " O Allah! If You consign me to Hell and separate me from my friends, I might bear the harsh hardships of the Hell with forbearance. But how could I withstand separation from You!" One who has reached such heights in his love for the Creator can't be disobedient to the Omnipotent Allah.

Allah exhorts the Prophet (a.s.) thus, " O Mohammed! Tell the people. If you wish to have Allah's friendship, then follow me that Allah will be friendly with you." Again Allah says, " One who is friendly with Allah, Allah is friendly with him. And those who have Allah's friendship are in safety." Such a person will be safe from the machinations of the Satan in this world.

And Hazrat Moosa bin Imran (a.s.) received the Revelation thus, " O Moosa ! Liar is a person who claims that he is friendly with Allah but sleeps away when the night comes. A friend seeks to converse with his beloved in loneliness! In the loneliness of nights Our friends converse with Us in a manner, as if, they are in Our presence! This status is achieved by a *momin (*pious person) when he thinks of Our countless Blessings and accepts their greatness."

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said to his companions, " Tell me which of Allah's Bounties is the first one?" Everyone made his guess about the bounties. Some said dainty food is the best Blessing, another said that the children, and more particularly the male child, are Allah's best Bounty. Alas, when the Prophet (a.s.) was not satisfied with any of the replies, he asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.), " O Ali! Tell me. Of the countless Bounties of Allah, which one is the best?!"

The Prophet's Vicegerent said, " O Prophet of Allah! You know better than me and whatever I know has been taught to me by you! But since you are ordering me to respond to your question, I am complying.

1. Of the Bounties of Allah, the best is the capability of invention. When there was nothing, He gave us the faculty of existence and observation." The Prophet (a.s.) said, " O Ali! You are right. Now, What is the next best Bounty?"
2. Hazrat Ali (a.s) said, " The second Bounty is that Allah has not created us like the flora and the minerals (mountains, rocks, trees etc) but He has endowed us with

spirit and animation." The Prophet (a.s.) said, " Verily! You are right. Tell me what is the third Bounty?"

3. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " The third Bounty is that Allah has bestowed to the human-kind the best features of face and body" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " You are right. What is the fourth Bounty?"
4. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " The fourth Bounty is that Allah has gifted the human beings with the external and spiritual senses." The Prophet (a.s.) rejoined, " True. What is the fifth Bounty?"
5. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " The fifth Bounty is that Allah has given intellect and wisdom to the human beings." The Prophet (a.s.) said, "You are right. O Ali! What is the sixth Bounty?
6. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied, " The sixth Bounty is that Allah has gifted to us the wealth of the True Faith and has not created us in ignorance." The Prophet (a.s.) said, " This too is true. What is the seventh Bounty? .
7. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " The seventh Bounty is that Allah has bestowed us with immortal life in the Hereafter. The prophet (a.s) said, " True! What is the eighth Bounty?"
8. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " Allah has created us free and not slave to anyone." The Prophet (a.s.) said, " You are right. What is the ninth Bounty?"
9. Hazrat Ali (a.s) said, " The ninth Bounty is that Allah has created the earth and the sky and all they contain for our benefit and gave us full control of these elements." The Prophet (a.s) assented and asked," What is the tenth Bounty?"
10. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied," The tenth Bounty is that Allah has created us men and superior to women." The Prophet (a.s.) asked" O Ali! Tell about more Bounties of Allah!"

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " O Allah's choicest of creations! The Bounties of Allah are uncountable. My entire life shall be insufficient to enumerate them.." The Prophet (a.s.) said, " O Ali! Truly, you are the inheritor of the knowledge! Whosoever follows you will be on the Right Path. Your friends shall find Deliverance! Your enemies and adversaries shall be deprived of the rewards on the Day of Judgement!" Then he (a.s.) said, " the way to achieve nearness of the Creator is to talk more of Him. The best prayer is the supplication of the pious person!" Hazrat Ali A.s.) said, " I don't worship Allah with the desire for the Heaven nor for the fear of the Hell! I Worship Him because I found Him deserving of Worship!"

This is the stage of Divine Understanding when even if the supplicant is sent to the Hell, he will continue with his supplication unmindful of the Hell Fire!

If someone questions that when at the height of piety Heaven and Hell have no relevance for the pious, then how is it that the prophets and the Infallible persons always expressed wish for the Heaven and deliverance from the Hell in their supplications?

The fact is that Heaven has different connotations in its intrinsic and apparent aspects. Its fruits, for example, have different tastes for different individuals to suit every individual

palate. For some the taste might be just good and for the others because of their profound faith, there will be the feeling of spiritual happiness.

For example: If a king serves food to a commoner from his royal table, the person would relish the delicacies doubly because he is getting the honour of having food on the royal table and the food that is out of the ordinary for him. When the same food is served to a nobleman, he too would enjoy eating it. But it would not be anything out of the ordinary for him that he gets the same food every day on his own table. However he cherishes the honour of sharing the table with his monarch! The prophets too pray for the Heaven that it would enhance their status in the eyes of the Creator and not for any physical comfort! When they crave safety from the Hell, it is not from the fear of the Fire but to prevent themselves from the displeasure of Allah! Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said in one of his supplications, " O Creator! I can have forbearance when You punish me but how could I bear separation from You. The heat of the Fire of the Hell can be bearable for me but how could I bear the heat of the fire of separation from you! . . .

. . . .

STEP 4
TOTAL DEVOTION OF MIND AND HEART

Among the conditions for prayer, one most important condition is the total dedication and devotion of the heart. If there is no humility and fear of Allah (*Khuzu wa Khushu)* in prayer, then it remains ineffective. Even, such prayer might bring the person punishment. If a person is conversing with the king and his mind is elsewhere and the king notices that his subject is not giving his full attention, he might punish the person for his lack of attention.

Humility of heart means that the heart is in full attention towards his Creator while in prayer. The person makes his body and mind totally submissive to the heart. If this state is achieved in prayer, then even the lonely (*furada)* prayer offered by a person will be highly rated. It would be quite possible that he might get the reward of congregational prayer because the heart in this case functions as the leader (*Imam)* of the congregation and the different parts of the body of the devotee as the followers.

As the faith increases, the humility of heart too increases in the same proportion. Therefore the humility of the hearts of the Infallible persons of the prophet's Family (*the Masoomeen*) is of the highest order. The limbs and body of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) used to shiver when going for the prayer. Somebody asked him, " O Ali! Is it not the same body that captured the fort of Khaibar and single handedly rent away the invincible gate of the fort!" Hazrat (a.s.) replied," No doubt! This is the same body but you must know that at this moment I am on my way carrying the important charge which even the land, the skies and the mountains refused to carry!"

It is said that one day Imam Zainal Abedin (a.s.) was engrossed in his prayer and Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.), still a child, fell in the well of their house. His mother started shouting, "O Son of the Prophet (a.s.)! Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has fallen into the well." But Imam Zainal Abedin (a.s) continued with his prayer. The mother of Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) was running between the parapet of the well and the place where the Imam was praying. Alas, when Imam Zainal Abedin (a.s.) finished his prayer, he went to the well and rescued his son who was hail and hearty. The Imam told to his wife," you know that I was standing in prayer before my Creator. If He was displeased, the consequence would be grave. Our purpose is only to get the goodwill of our Lord and the biggest personal loss is inconsequential. There was no reason for me to fear about the safety of my son. I was present in front of my Master with total dedication of my heart and was not attending to the household matters!"

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said that some devotees offered prayers with one-third dedication of heart, some others with one-fourth dedication and others with one-fifth dedication of the heart. The Angels will record the prayers for reward only to the extent of the dedication of the heart of the supplicant. Therefore it is advised that people should offer as many supplementary prayers as possible besides their mandatory prayers.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) said," the heart in which there is the desire for reward and fear of retribution on the Day of Judgement will become eligible for entry to the Heaven."

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said," when a person prepares to offer prayer, Allah's kindness and blessings shadow him and the Angel of Beneficence proclaims,' O Creation of Allah! If you know how much your Creator is kind on you, you will not raise your head from your prostration!'"

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," when the attention of a person is diverted from his prayer, then Allah says,' O My Creation! Is there any god greater than Me towards whom your attention is diverted.' Then Allah observes the lack of attention of the person thrice and finally He gives to him no more attention.

The dedication of the heart during prayers is dependent very much on the circumstances of the person. The more the person is perfect in his Faith and Belief, the more dedication of heart he will manifest. Jafar bin Ahmed narrates that when the Prophet (a.s.) used to stand up for offering prayer the colour of his face used to change and from his chest a sound used to emanate which used to indicate enthusiasm.

When Imam Hasan (a.s.) used to do the ablutions for offering prayer, his body used to shiver and the colour of his face used to turn yellow. People asked him the reason for this change in him. He said," It is necessary for every worshipper that when he prepares to go to the presence of his Creator, he keeps in mind His Greatness and Omnipotence. Because of this feeling the person's face will turn yellow and his body will shiver."

It is said that after completing the ablution for prayer Imam Zainal Abedin (a.s.) used to have shivering in his body and the face used to turn yellow. On being asked by people, he

used to reply," don't you know the Greatest Creator before whom I am going to offer my supplications."

It is narrated that Fatima binte Hazrat Ali once called Jabir Ansari and told him," you are a companion of the Holy Prophet (a.s.). I am requesting you to advice Imam Zainal Abedin (a.s.) not to prolong his prayers that his forehead, thighs and back are injured and swollen." Jabir Ansari went to the presence of the Imam (a.s.) and found him busy in his prayer and the weakness of his body and visage was evident. The Imam (a.s.) gave some place to Jabir to sit beside him and inquired about his health in feeble voice. Jabir said," O Son of the Prophet (a.s.)! Allah has created the Heaven for you and your friends and the Hell for your enemies and adversaries. Then why are you taking so much hardship on yourself?" the Imam A.s.) said," O companion of the Prophet (a.s.)! My ancestor, the Prophet (a.s.) of Allah, who has a great status in the eyes of the Creator, and also Allah has forgiven all possible acts of omission and commission of his past and present, kept himself so much busy in prayer that his feet used to develop inflammation. The companions used to tell the Prophet (a.s.) that Allah has been so kind on him that He promised to forgive his mistakes.(*tark e aula)* Then they wondered why the Prophet (a.s.) was inflicting so much hardship on himself.

The Prophet (a.s.) used to say," O my companions! When God is showering so much kindness on man, is it not his duty to thank Allah for the bounties He has granted."

Jabir said to Imam Zainal Abedin (a.s.)," O my master! Have kindness on your followers. Because of your existence Allah is kind on the Muslims and no curse is falling on them from the skies."

The Imam (a.s.) replied," O Jabir! I wish to be like my ancestors in prayer that I am able to meet them!"

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that one day his father went to the presence of his own father and found him busy in his prayer. He noticed that the face of the Imam (a.s.) had turned yellow and his forehead was bruised and the feet were swollen. The cheeks of the Imam (a.s.) were injured because of excessive crying. When he saw the condition of his father, he cried out aloud. The Imam's attention was diverted towards his son and finding him crying he asked him to fetch the book of Ameeral Momineen (a.s.) in which he had discussed about the subject of prayer. He fetched the book. The Imam (a.s.) cried the more after reading the book and said," Who has the strength to pray like the Ameeral Momineen (a.s.) did!

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that when Imam Zainal Abedin (a.s.) used to stand up with the intention of the prayer, his face used to turn yellow and while in prostration, his eyes used to get wet.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that Imam Zainal Abedin (a.s.) used to offer one thousand *rakaat of prayer* in a period of one day and night. When he used to stand up for the prayer, the colour of his face used to change and it used to appear as if he was

standing like a hapless person in the presence of a great king. His entire body used to shiver and it used to give the impression as if he was offering his last prayer. When asked about his condition during the prayer, he used to retort that one should suitably present himself to the Great Creator.

It is said that one of the Imam's child fell from a height and fractured his hand. There was commotion in the house and a bonesetter was called. The bone of the child was set; but all this while the Imam (a.s.) was busy in his prayer. The next morning when he saw the arm of his son in a sling, he inquired about the reason of the injury.

One day the Imam's house caught fire and the neighbours put it out. The Imam (a.s.) was totally oblivious of the incident. When the people asked him the reason, he replied," I was busy putting out another big fire!

Abu Ayyub narrates from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that when Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) used to stand up for prayers, the colour of his red face used to turn yellow and it always gave an impression that he was face to face with Allah, busy conversing with Him.

The Creator of the Universe has ordered man to offer prayer in the morning, evening and noon, five times in a day to renew his dedication and obedience to Him.

Prayer is the height of devotion that lifts a human being from the ground to the unimaginable heights. It is the medium for achieving nearness to the Almighty Allah. Prayer awakens the believers from their slumber of negligence and reminds them of the Hereafter. Islam has set clearly defined schedules for the prayers and it keeps the believers reminded to come for the congregations. The first call comes in the early morning to raise the people from their slumber. This call, which is termed the *adhaan,* is made in loud tones in which the name of the Great Allah (*Allah ho Akbar)* is repeated four times to break the slumber of the proud and the negligent. Then follows the witness there is no god but Allah.

Man should not worship other humans, animals, plants and other elements of nature like the mountains and the rivers. You must reiterate that He, Allah, is One and Only Creator and Has made arrangements for the benefit of man in this world and the hereafter. He has sent His Messenger, His Friend and Prophet (a.s.), with clear messages for the believers to listen to and act on them implicitly.

Then the worshippers are exhorted to make haste to come for the prayer, which is to their own advantage. They are told that the prayer is the best of acts and they must hurry to join it. At the end of the call to the believers it is repeated that Allah is Great.

There are people in this world who, even after hearing the loud call to prayer, continue with their mundane activities. But there are others who willingly pay heed to the call, keep away their worldly tasks for the time, and proceed to join the prayer.

It is said that when the time for the prayer comes, one angel calls on behalf of Allah,“ O believers! Proceed towards prayer and extinguish the fire of your sins with the light of the prayer.” When a pious person decides to go for prayer, he is required to cleanse himself of the apparent dirt. He should also cleanse his mind of any negative thoughts that might be there. When he is ready for the prayer, first he must wash his face. At this time he must say,” O Allah! You have said that on the Day of Judgement some faces will turn black and others will be white and shiny. Please make my face shiny and prevent it from going black.” While cleansing the right hand, he should remember that on the Day of Judgement, the pious would carry their record of actions in the right hands and the sinners would carry their records in the left hands.

Therefore he must pray that his record of actions is held in the right hand on the Day of Judgement. While anointing (*masah*) his forehead, he should pray,” O Allah! Please be kind on me.” While anointing the feet, he should pray that the feet do not falter on the Bridge of *Sarat* on the Day of Judgement.

It has been mentioned in the traditions that a house which has dogs, where intoxicants are stored, where pictures and paintings are kept, the Angels of blessings do not come. These things should be kept away from the living quarters and even the thoughts of these forbidden things should be banished from the minds of the believers. At the threshold of the mosque, he should say,” O Allah! You have opened this door to me, please open the doors to Your nearness too for me!” While standing at the place of prayer, he should say *iqamah* and in his mind recall the words of the *adhan* and their meanings because prayer is the height of piety and the Prophet (a.s.), while he was in *Meraj*, reiterated the words *Allah O Akbar* while entering every stage. Therefore before every prayer the words *Allah O Akbar* are repeated seven times.

Now the person is ready for the conversation, that is, for offering his prayer to Allah. At this stage, he should say *aoozo billahis samial aleem minashaitanir rajeem* to ward off the Satan. Now that the time to go to the presence of the Almighty Allah has come, the worshipper should say *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem.* These words are reiterated before any work is commenced and particularly so when one starts to offer his prayer. Even in our mundane lives we have to praise the important persons when we approach them. When we stand in the Presence of Allah, the Beneficent and Merciful, it is natural that we must praise Him and acknowledge that He is the Lord of The Day of Judgement (*Youm iddeen)*. Then the worshipper says, “*Iyyaka nabudo* (We worship only You)”

Therefore, the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, “ Whilst praying think that you are seeing Him (*Allah*) and in humility submit, *waiiaka nastaeen* (O Sustainer! We ask for your succor for our failings and shortcomings!). Thereafter a request is made to Allah to include the prayers of the supplicant with the prayers of the persons on whom Allah has

showered his Blessings and Bounties and not of those on whom Allah's wrath has fallen!"

Now we quote Hazrat Ali's (a.s.) eloquent saying, " The best prayer is Knowledge of Allah (*Marifat)* and Identification that He is ahead of everything and nothing was there before Him. He is the only One and has none like Him. He is Immortal and has no end. He is the Creator of the Universe and everything that is found on the earth and in the sky. He is Omniscient (*Khabeer*) and Gentle (*Lateef*) and he is *Omnipotent; that He has control over all things!"*

CHAPTER : 3

THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL -KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXALTED CREATOR

The most important fundamental in all Prayer is the knowledge and understanding of the Creator.The understanding of the Creator is directly related to the degree of Faith the believer has in his Creator. Where there is no faith, all worship is futile. To the contrary, worship sans Faith is subject to Retribution.

WHAT IS FAITH? Faith is the belief in the Existence of the Creator and His Attributes--- the Positive Attributes (*Sifat e Subutiah)* and Negative Attributes (*Sifat e Salbiah).* The other important components of the believer's faith are the Belief in Allah's Justice, His being One and Only God, the Belief that Mohammed (a.s.) is the Last and Final of the line of the Prophets and acceptance of the Twelve Imams (a.s.) from the Family as his Vicegerents; the belief in *Meaad Jismani* (The Hereafter- when people will be raised before the Day of Judgement for questioning). Belief in the existence of the Heaven and the Hell and the concept of Reward and Retribution too are important aspects of the Faith

THE SECOND FUNDAMENTAL THE FAITH

Faith is the Eternal Wealth for a believer. Loss of Faith can be the Eternal Curse for a believer. Satan is the veritable consumer of Faith and Actions because the thief always aims at the most precious object of his target. When he fails in that attempt, he contents

himself with burgling less important things. For example : Creating doubts about Belief in the Existence of Allah in the minds of the believers, Satan thus consigns them to the Hell. To save themselves from this eventuality, the believers should steadfastly adhere to the *Safina-e-nijat* (the Ship of Deliverance). Those who are dedicated to the *Ahl al Baytr* will board this ship to find cure for all the ailments, it is the succor for the drowning and the guarantee against the machinations of the Satan. Unless a person gets a clear understanding of Allah, it may be difficult for him to understand the Prophet (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.). For understanding of Allah there are two definite requirements:

1.Knowledge of the Certainty of Existence:
This is evidenced by examples. The knowledge of Certainty of Existence is in the nature. Therefore the unbelievers were not asked to believe in Allah, but they were asked not to believe in a comity of deities.

It is narrated that the Prophet asked an Arab as to how he identified Allah? He said, " I saw the droppings of the camel on the way and knew that some camels had passed by. I saw the foot- marks of men and knew that some men had used the path. We have such vast land, the sky the sun, the moon and the stars. Don't they indicate that there must be someone who has made them?"

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that someone wanted him to give an explanation about the existence of Allah. The Imam (a.s.) asked him, " Have you ever been on any voyage at sea?"
The man replied in the affirmative.
The Imam (a.s.) rejoined, " Have you come across a storm while on board a ship?"
The man replied in affirmative.
The Imam (a.s.) said, " Did you get a feeling at that time that there must be some power that could come to the rescue of the ship?"
The man replied in the affirmative.
The Imam (a.s.) rejoined, " Yes! That Power is Allah!!"

But the atheists and agnostics who raise objections at every step and find fault with the creations of Allah are like the blind men who have been left in a palatial mansion to partake of the dainty food laid out for them. Some blind persons trample the bread , some other person puts his foot in the bowl of the soup. The blind persons complain of the host being careless in spreading the food in a wrong place. They are, no doubt, blind to the fact that they have been provided with the best of food in the best of surroundings.

2..*Idrak Kunah*
Zat e Khudawandi:

The second type of Knowledge of the Existence of the Creator *Idrak Kunha* (that means, Realization of the Reality) of His Person. This is impossible for the human intellect. When a human being is not capable of understanding its own personality, how could he delve into understanding the Personality of the Creator! But it is the human intellect that has created innumerable sects of various beliefs. Some sects have concluded that Allah is a handsome youth and others believe that He is old with a flowing white beard! Some others say that He is everywhere and everything is Him!! There are also those who believe that Allah has transmigrated or penetrated into the bodies of those excellent in piety!!!

Therefore, we have to bear in mind Allah's clear instruction in this matter, " Whatever the Prophet (a.s.) gives, take it." The Prophet (a.s.) has said, " I am leaving behind two weighty things amidst you; one is the Quran and the other my *Ahl al Bayt.* Follow them and you shall find Deliverance." We have to follow these and should not use our intellect in this matter!

In short, the perfect in piety is one who says about the person of the Creator that he has not understood Him. Because understanding Him consists in knowing that no one has the faculty to understand Him. Therefore one who says that he has not understood his Creator, he is the one who has understood Him!

Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) was once asked about the Unity and the Existence of Allah. He said, " Allah was aware that in times to come there will be people who will think and discuss about Him. Therefore He revealed the verses of *Iqlas* and *Hadeed*. One should not go beyond these in interpreting the existence of Allah, lest they go astray."

It is narrated that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " The Twelve Infallible Imams (a.s.) are the Chapters of Knowledge and Understanding of the Creator. By following them one can achieve the path of guidance and understanding. If they were not there, none would have understood Allah. Through them Allah has completed the *Hujjat* (Proof)." There are several traditions of the Prophet (a.s.) and the Masoomeen in this regard. But Satan has led astray many intellectuals who have used their thinking instead of depending on the dictates of Allah, the Prophet (a.s.) and the other Infallible persons. With their fertile imagination they gave Allah several forms. The Platonic Mystics (*Ulema e ashraqi)*and Scholastic Philosophers (*Mutakallameen*) differ very much in their concept of Allah. Some of the *Mutakallameen* believe that Allah has a body and is like the radiant light.

THE SECTS OF SUFIS :

Some Sunni sufis say the face of Allah is like a simple youth. Some others say that He is like an old man with flowing silvery beard. Some others say that Allah has a huge body and is sitting in the firmament. Some Sufis, Mutakallameen and the Christians believe

in the transmigration or penetration of God. While the Christians restrict the phenomenon of the penetration only to Jesus, the other two groups believe that Allah will penetrate into anyone who has reached the height of piety. Because of this belief Allah has termed the Christians unbelievers (*Kuffar*) in the Quran and Has cursed them.

There is another sect of the Sufis that is worst than the believers of transmigration. They believe in the Unity of Allah. They believe that Allah is everything and everywhere. He can come in different forms and shapes. Sometimes he is Zaid, at others he is Amr, sometimes He assumes the shape of a cat or a dog or anything else. Some Hindus too have a similar belief. The book of Brahmins, *Jog*, is on the same subject. The Sufis value this book very much. They think that this book is better than the theological works of the *Shias.* Even some *Shias* think that the Sufis are right. In their ignorance they are accepting these beliefs and rendering themselves unbelievers (*Kafirs*).Only those who remain steadfast in following the *Ahl al Bayt* are on the Right Path.

Most of the Sufis are from the *Sunni Ashari* sect. But there is a lot of diversity in their beliefs and ways. If in some book it is said that *Abu Hanifa* advises praying in a particular way, then another says that *Sufian Suri* advises another method.

Kulaini narrates through an authentic source that one day *Sadeer* was on his way home from the mosque and Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) was proceeding towards the mosque. The Imam held *Sadeer's* hand and turning towards Kaaba said, " O *Sadeer !* People are required by Allah to come to his House, the Kaaba, circumambulate it and express their allegiance to the Imam (a.s.) as Allah says in his Holy Book,' I shall forgive one who repents, adopts the Faith, does good deeds and is guided'"

Then the Imam (a.s.) pointed towards his chest and said, " O Sadeer! Getting guided means loving, obeying us. I shall show to you the pilferers of the Faith. Look there! (At that moment Abu Hanifa and Sufian Suri were sitting in the mosque. The Imam pointed his finger toward them.). These are the bandits of the Faith and have not received Guidance from Allah! If these persons stay at their homes and send the people to us, then we shall guide them on the path of the Faith and instruct to them the teachings of Allah and his Prophet (a.s.)."

Another reliable source narrates that an inhabitant of Mecca said that one day Sufian Suri asked him to accompany him to the presence of Imam Mohammed bin Jafar (a.s.). We reached him at a time when the Imam was about to mount his steed. Sufian said, " Kindly repeat to us the Sermon delivered by the Prophet (a.s.) in the Mosque of Kheef." The Imam (a.s.) said, " I am now proceeding on some work. I shall relate to you the Sermon some other time."Sufian said, " In the name of your relationship with the Prophet (a.s.), I implore you to relate the Sermon now." The Imam (a.s.) dismounted from the horse and related the Sermon and Sufian Suri started writing it down. Sufial Suri read back what he had noted. Then the Imam (a.s.) mounted the horse and went on his way. Then the person asked Sufian to give him the manuscript that he wanted to see the contents. After reading the contents, the person told to Sufian Suri, " By Allah! The Imam (a.s.) has made something obligatory on you that the Prophet (a.s) has said,' Anyone who has three

qualities shall never be subject to malice and guilty of breach of trust:.1.Righteous deeds that are done in the way of Allah, 2.Being a well-wisher of the Imam (a.s.) and the Believers..3. Living amicably with the Muslims." He asked Sufian Suri, " Who are the Imams (a.s.) whose obedience is obligatory?" Sufian replied, " Muawiah, Yazeed and Marwan bin al Hakm!" The person also asked Sufian, " Which is the group of Muslims with whom people are required to live amicably?" Sufian Suri replied, " The Sunnis of Marjia Sect *(Who say that a person who missed prayers and fasts, is not aware of the method of the Bath of Purification, demolishers of Kaba, have done incest with their own mothers, have a Faith equivalent to the Faith of angels Gabriel and Mekail)* or Sunnis of the Sect of *Qadaria* (*who say Allah cannot do everything that He wishes*) or the *Kharijites,* the Dissenters (*who call Hazrat Al (a.s.)i an unbeliever and curse him)."* Sufian added, " However what is the opinion of the Shias and their Imams (a.s.) about this tradition?" The person said, " The Shias believe that it is obligatory to obey Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and the Infallible Imams of the Ahl al Bayt!" Hearing this Sufian Suri tore the paper on which he had noted the Sermon of the Prophet and said, " Don't mention to anyone what transpired today!"
It is a truth that such hostility and denial of the Holy Imams (a.s.) was practiced not only by Abu Hanifa but also by many who were from the earlier period. Mention of these will be made at appropriate places in this book

In the book, *Futuhat,* it is said, *Subhan min azhar al ashiya wa Huwa aina* (Pure is the Allah who has manifested things, and the things are Him."

At another place in " *Khusoos al Hakm" it says, "* Hazrat *Noah (a.s.)* made a mistake as the Prophet. His people were righteous and were drowned in the sea of Piety". The author writes at several places in the book that people should neither adhere to any particular religion nor deny any religion. They should not deny even the idols because they are the manifestations of god. God is present in everything. Allah had not given ascendancy to Hazrat Harun (a.s.) over the cow worshippers because He wanted to be worshipped in every manifestation. In the eyes of Allah there is nothing in the world that isn't a deity. The author says that the Christians are termed unbelievers only because they believe in the Unity of God with the proviso that Jesus too is God.

Some people came to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and said that they considered him god because of his attributes. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) was furious at this blasphemous thought and ordered them to be drowned in a deep well. Imagine, when calling such a revered personality god is blasphemy, then how grave it is to term dogs, cats and stones as gods. One will wonder when some people believe that god is in everything and everything is god! Therefore some wrongly believe that a person who reaches a stage that he sees Allah in everything, he is exempt from offering prayer. The Verse in which Allah exhorts people to offer prayers, " *Wa aabudu Rabbaka hatta yatiakal eqeen* , and worship thy Lord till death catches up with you", they interpret the following way to suit their belief, " and worship thy Lord till you have faith in His Unity". Maulana Hilli says in his book, *Kashf al Haq wa Nahj al Sidq, "* Allah doesn't penetrate into anything, because if this premise is accepted, then Allah will be bound to a place and His Attribute is that He is everywhere and not subject to any restriction of time or place.

DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPT OF TRANSMIGRATION OR PENETRATION

One sect of Sunni Sufis believes that Allah penetrates into the Sufis of high piety. Therefore people visit the mausoleums of saints. Sometimes Sufis claim that Allah and all things are united and at others they say that Allah has transmigrated or penetrated into things. The prayer of these sects is singing, clapping, whistling and dancing. They do this, despite the fact that Allah has forbidden such activities. Allah addresses the unbelievers thus, "*Wa ma kaana salatuhum indalbaithe illa makaan wa tasdeeyatan*- their (meaning the hypocrites) prayer and supplication is nothing more than whistling and clapping near the Kaaba." What more impunity one can expect from the people that when Allah expresses His displeasure at the actions of the hypocrites, they perpetrate them.

I have experienced once that some Sufis came to the mausoleum of Imam Hussain (a.s.). at dusk. Eryone of them offered prayers excepting one who sat quietly. Similarly at the *Isha* prayer, everyone joined the congregation barring the one who sat quietly at the earlier prayer. I asked one of the Sufis as to why that person didn't join the prayers. He replied, " The person is not obliged to pray because he has reached Allah. For those who have reached Allah, there is no curtain between them and Him. Then why should they have the curtain of Prayer between them and Him.Prayer is the *Haajib* (the janitor or the door keeper) between the Creator and the Creation!"

O wise people! Evaluate their beliefs and way of worship! Imagine their excuse of foregoing the Obligatory Prayers! The height of their perfidy is that such persons are considered the *Abdals* (the saints)!

The Sufis write down their thoughts in verse and their followers read them, sing them, do clapping in unison, jump and dance! They term these acts as prayers. More about them later on!!

THE THIRD FUNDAMENTAL
THE STAGES OF UNDERSTANDING

There are several stages of the knowledge and understanding of the Creator. The Understanding progresses and reaches the next higher stage with the development of the degree of Faith in the person. Khawaja Naseeruddin Tusi says that the Stages of Understanding of the Almighty are like the stages of knowledge about fire.

The first stage of knowledge about the potentiality of the fire is through the word of mouth. We are told that fire is that which will burn anything it comes in contact with. Similarly, the knowledge about the Existence of the Creator is through the word f mouth. One hears from others that there is Allah, and he believes. This is the Faith through Emulation (*Taqleed)*.

The second stage of knowledge about the fire is that when a person notices the smoke, he believes there is some fire in the neighborhood. Similarly, the second stage of the Knowledge of Existence of Allah is through the signs one gets to confirm the Belief.

The third stage of knowledge about fire is when someone personally experiences nearness to the source of the fire. This Third Stage of the Knowledge about the Existence of the Creator is the privilege of those pious persons who derive contentment from the Light in their hearts about the Knowledge of the Existence of the Almighty Allah. They wonder at experiencing the Lord's creations around them and rivet their attention on Him.

The fourth stage of understanding about the fire is that a person dares to come in personal contact with the fire. This stage of Understanding Allah is when the pious persons whose dedication has reached such heights that they are ready to sacrifice themselves (*fanafillah)* in the way of the Creator. This stage is reached after achieving highest degree of Devotion.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) narrates the following tradition of the Holy Prophet (a.s.):

" When a person offers optional Sunnat prayers (*Nawafil and Awaqib*) after the Mandatory (*Faraed*) prayers, Allah says that He makes him such a friend that whosoever is the friend of that person will in turn be Allah's friend. Then the eyes of the person through which he sees will not remain his own, but they will be Allah's eyes.

Similarly the ears through which he hears, will be Allah's ears. His tongue which he uses to express his thoughts will be Allah's tongue."

Hearing this Holy Tradition, the Sufis have drawn wrong conclusions and thus sprang up several orders of these groups. If they had heard the interpretation of the Tradition from the Perfect in Knowledge (*Rasiqoon fil Ilm*) this confusion would not have resulted. The true purport of this Tradition is that when a pious person gets deeply engrossed in the thought and love of Allah, the Almighty becomes his tongue. He sees and hears what Allah approves of..

THE RANKS OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CREATOR

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Perhaps the meaning of this Divine Tradition (*Hadees e Qudsi*) is that when a devout person attains a high degree of piety, Allah becomes his eye. It would mean that whatever his eye sees, the person visualizes the attributes of Allah in that. The person doesn't focus his eye s on anything that Allah forbids to be seen. He doesn't hear anything that Allah does not want him to hear. The Tradition can also have the meaning that every person, by nature, prefers to use his limbs and senses as per his own wish, but a pious person subjects all his actions to the express wish of Allah. The love of Allah dominates all other thoughts in his psyche.

There is another very appropriate meaning of the Tradition. May Allah make those who have gone astray accept this interpretation and mend their ways..

Allah has created many instincts and faculties in the human beings. He, the Creator, has exhorted the people to use them the way He wants them to use. And then Allah promises:
"Wa ma anfaqtum min shaiun fa Huwa yuqlifuhu- whatever you spend in the Way of Allah- He gives you more in return"
Or, He will give you such bounties that might not be similar to those given earlier. Therefore, wealth or property that might be lost by way of fire or theft, or is spent in charity or for a good cause, a person would get immense benefits in the Hereafter. These rewards would be unimaginably more than the satisfaction one would derive from acquiring and hoarding the transitory material things of this world. Here, a verse from the Holy Quran is quoted:

" *Yujahedoona fi sabeel Allahe wa la yaqafoona laumata laayemin- They strive to spend in the way of Allah and are not afraid of taunts."*

One must spend in the way of Allah. Those who are not worried about the concerns of the worldly people and boldly act in the way of Allah, shall be rewarded handsomely in the Hereafter.

Hazrat Ameer al Momineen and his companions used to spend their energies in the Obedience and Prayer of Allah. Allah endowed them with such energy that their strength was far more than usual for the humans. Therefore Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " I have not broken and lifted the gate of the fort of Khaiber with my human strength. It was the Divine Strength that helped me achieve the impossible." This is such a strength that can bring together the earth and the sky without moving a hand. This strength or faculty does not vanish with the demise of the persons. Because they don't do anything without the wish of Allah, they become subservient to the Wishes of Allah.,Who infuses His wishes in their hearts and all their actions are according to the plans of Allah..

There is an oft- repeated tradition that says, " The heart of a pious person is held in the two fingers of Allah." It means that the heart of the person is in the control of Allah and He turns the subject whichever way He wants. The verse of *Ad-dahr, " Wa ma tashaoona illa ainyasha Allah,* which has been revealed in the praise of the *Ahl al-Bayt* also means that they don't intend to do anything unless Allah wishes them to do it. Therefore, the pious cry for long hours in fear of Allah and spend the whole nights in prayers without any concern of losing their eyesight with such heavy stress. They care only for their subservience to their Friend, that is, Almighty Allah. Therefore, Allah endows them with a special light that never fades and they are able to witness things that are beyond the ken of the mortal eyes!

Here we quote another Tradition, " Be aware of the intellect of the *Momin* that he sees with the light provided by Allah. Allah opens the springs of eloquence to him without his knowledge. He benefits others from these springs as he derives benefit for himself. The springs have no end."

" Reaching this stage, he hears, sees, moves and speaks only with My strength."
It is evident therefore that this august status is reserved for those who are the Closest to Allah and not for all and sundry. The meaning of the Tradition *Taqlaqu baqlaq Allah* too means that one should endeavor to acquire manners like those of Allah Almighty. It will be like tempering the iron in the fire. The iron becomes red hot like the fire, although it is not fire itself but has acquired the colour and effect of the fire. Similarly Allah endows some of His attributes to men in lesser or higher degree. But the knowledge of men is infinitesimal when compared to the Knowledge of Allah. When one acquires this meagre knowledge, he becomes vainglorious. When Allah bestows some power to an individual and he becomes a king, he proudly proclaims, *lemanil malak al youm!- ' who is the king today!!* There are two sides to the human excellence. One is positive and the other is negative. The positive excellence of a person is from and with the Consent of Allah and the negative excellence is an aberration of the person's own thinking process.

May Allah protect the *Shias of Mohammed's Progeny* from the machinations of Jinn and men and they keep steadfast on the Right Path.

When one becomes a true bondsman of Allah, his heart will be the Abode of Allah, then all machinations of the evil against him will go in vain. A true lover of Allah like Abu Dharr shall always be remembered with respect. However much Yazid felt that he had

subdued Hussain; Hussain will be eulogized from the pulpits and Yazid cursed till the end of this world. .
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THE FOURTH FUNDAMENTAL
TRANSITORY NATURE OF THE WORLD

The previous tradition also is indicative of the fact that this material world is transitory and only Allah the Creator is Immortal. He was there when there was nothing, He shall always be there when nothing will remain of the world. The people of all the faiths who believe in the coming of the Prophets, subscribe to the belief that everything in this world is transitory and only God (*Allah)* is immortal. But some philosophers, who hold the view that all the living things will perish and the universe with the land and the skies shall remain forever, are unbelievers in the eyes of the Faith of Islam. All the Revealed Books have asserted again and again about the Day of Reckoning when the earth, the sky, the mountains and the stars would break into smithereens and fly around like shreds of paper. Barring God (*Allah) nothing will remain in the universe.*

THE FIFTH FUNDAMENTAL
ABOUT THE INDIVIDUALITY OF THE CREATOR

Faradiat or the Individuality of Allah means that He is One, Incomparable and Unique. He is *Wahdahu la Shareek,* that is, He is Alone and Has no Equals. If there was any other god, he would certainly have introduced himself, and would send his laws and assertions through messengers. Further there would have been conflict in the Universe. One god would order something and the other god would ask for the contrary. If both the gods issued the same edicts then what would be the need for having more than one!

"He has always been there and shall always be there." This expression does not mean that Allah is there ever since the Universe has come about. But it means that even when the Universe was not there, Allah was there and He will be there even after the Universe is destroyed.

There are several traditions of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.), which can be summarized as follows:

"The beginning of Faith consists in knowledge about Allah and its height is in the belief that Allah is incomparable. The claim of incomparability of Allah is at its height when the person accepts the Attributes and the Individuality of Allah as one. Because if the Individuality and the Attributes are different, then there can be a doubt of duality and it is impossible that the Creator will have an equal."

THE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH

Reliable traditions indicate that on the ninth day of the demise of the Holy Prophet (a.s.), Hazrat Ali (a.s) delivered a sermon, the initial part of it was as follows:

"Praise be to Allah who has rendered the wisdom incapable of finding about His Individuality and Attributes. Allah is One, Is not of many and Is Incomparable. He is away from everything. This distance is not because of location but is because of Excellence and Purity. He is Omnipotent and in Control. These Attributes are not such that they are there in the things but with His own Knowledge and Potentiality, He knows about everything. He does not have to physically look at anything. It is believed that He has always been there. But this doesn't mean that His always having been there is time bound. He is in fact since the beginning and shall always be there. His not being there is impossible."

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says," Allah is Ancient (*Qadeem*), One (*Wahed*) and Eternal (*Samad*). His Attributes are Unique and there cannot be another equal of His."

The narrator asked the Imam (a.s.)," In Iraq there is a sect of people who believe that the Attribute with which Allah listens and that with which He sees are different."
The Imam (a.s.) replied," They are liars and apostates that they compare the Attributes of Allah with human attributes. Allah has His own way of hearing and looking at things."

It is said that Imam Raza observed that one who has such beliefs is a polytheist and not our Shia. Allah is Omniscient and Omnipotent; He sees and He hears."

EXPLANATION OF A POINT

It is said that during the battle of the Camel (*jamal*), an Arab approached Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and asked him," What is the meaning of Allah being One?"
The companions of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) chided him for coming to ask a question when they were in the midst of a battle.
Hazrat Ali (a.s) calmed them down and said that the very purpose of the conflict was on the point of accepting the Unity of Allah.

Then he addressed the questioner thus," O person! You have said that Allah is one. It has four meanings. Out of those four meanings, two are impossible for the Individuality of Allah and the other two are definite. The first two that are impossible are that we call Allah the First because if we call Him the First then there must be another like Him and

that would be heresy; as the Christians say that God is the third of the three gods. The meaning of the second impossibility is considering Allah as an object. For example Zaid is called one of the men. If anyone calls Allah as one of several gods, it would be heresy. The other two meanings are definite. The first is that He is Unique in His Excellence and there is none other equal to Him or His partner. The other definite meaning is that Allah has no definite physical personality."

Here it is worth mentioning that philosophers and thinkers deliberated for thousands of years to arrive at the truth but our Imams (a.s.) have provided much clearer explanation of the facts in their traditions. However people don't give serious thought to this matter.

THE SIXTH FUNDAMENTAL
THE IMMORTALITY OR ETERNITY OF ALLAH

Allah is Immortal and Eternal. Some people think that since Heaven and Hell shall always be there, therefore immortality does not remain the Unique Attribute of Allah because the inmates of the Heaven and the Hell too will remain there eternally. This is not true, because the Immortality of Allah is attributed to His own wish while the longevity of the inmates of the Heaven and the Hell is not of their own choosing. The Immortality of Allah is His Attribute and cannot be changed and the common creatures have had different shapes at different times- they had been dust, water, flesh, bones etc. They never remained in one physical condition, while Allah is the same for ever, as ever!

THE SEVENTH FUNDAMENTAL
THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE

This tradition also points towards the fact that Allah is the Creator of the land and the sky and everything that is found on them. Some philosophers believe that the *Uqool e Ashara* are the creators of these. Some *Ghaali* (exagerrating) Shias too believe that the creators of the land and the sky are the Holy Infallibles. But according to the traditions of the Imams (a.s.), such belief is absolutely wrong.

Yasir asked Imam Reza (a.s.), " O son of the Prophet! What is your opinion about *Tafweed* (delegation)?" The Imam replied, " Follow the precepts communicated by Allah through the Prophet. The other attributes of Creation and Sustenance, He has not delegated to anyone."

Abu Hashim Jafferi narrates that Imam Ali ar Reza (a.s.) was asked by the people his opinion about the belief of the *Ghillat* (the exaggerators) and the *Uquool e Ashara.* The Imam replied, " Believing anyone other than Allah as capable of creating the land and the

sky is sheer heresy. Friendship with such persons, eating with them and having marital relations with them is strictly forbidden."

In the book, *Ehtejajaat,* Ali bin Ahmed Qummi writes that some Shias had a difference of opinion that some said that Allah has given to the Imam the power to create and provide sustenance. Others were denying this. Mohammed bin Othman Umri, who was a deputy of the Twelfth Imam (a.s.), wrote a submission (*Areeza)* seeking the Imam's clarification. The Imam's reply was that it is only Allah who creates and provides sustenance. It is another matter that in response to the supplications of the Holy Imams he creates and provides sustenance as per their wishes."

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THE EIGHTH FUNDAMENTAL
CREATION OF THE FIRMAMENT

Reliable traditions indicate that the skies are not close to each other and the distance between two skies could be the equivalent to travelling for a period of five hundred years. All the skies are replete with angels. The angels possess light bodies. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that if an angel descends to the earth, there won't be any space left there for anything else. The number of the angels is more than all the living creatures put together, and in size there is no creature larger than some them.

Some angels are so huge that the distance between their ears and the shoulders is equivalent to the distance that can be traveled in seven hundred years. It is mentioned in the Traditions that there are seven skies and also there are seven earths in the firmament. There are so many creations in these skies and the earths that it would be impossible to have a count of them.

ABOUT THE ANGELS

The philosophers say that the angels are the figment of imagination of the present level of intellect and the psychic condition of the humans. But endorsing this opinion of the philosophers would be tantamount to denying the phenomenon supported by Divine Revelations and would go in the realm of *Kufr*.

There is no other creation in the universe larger in number than the angels and their bodies too are larger than those of any other creatures excepting the souls (*Rooh*).Ibne Babawiya narrates through reliable sources that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) was asked about the Omnipotence of Allah. Hazrat Ali (a.s), after praising the Beneficent and Merciful Allah, said that Allah has created an angel who, when it descended on the earth, would find the entire area of the planet insufficient for itself. Certain other angels are so large that they occupy the entire space of the sky. There are also angels that are so large that the sky

comes up to their waist. Some others are standing in the atmosphere and the earth is near their ankles.

Then the people asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.) about the curtains that are over the skies. He replied that the First Curtain (*Hijab e Awwal*) has seven strata. Every curtain has the width equivalent to the distance traveled in 500 years and the intermediate distance between any two curtains is the same as mentioned above. In the space between any two curtains there are 70,000 angels and the strength of every individual angel is more than that of all the men and *Jinns* put together. Above the curtains there is *Sirr e Awqat e Jalal.* These are seventy thousand curtains and each curtain has 70,000 angels and there is a distance of 500 years of travel time between any two curtains. Then there is the *Saradaq e Izzat, Saradaq e Kibria, Saradaq e Azmat, Saradaq e Quds* and *Saradaq e Jabroot.* After these there are the *Saradaqs of Noor e Abyad, Saradaq e Wahdaniyat.* After all these, there is *Hijab e Aala,* the Superior Curtain.

Ali bin Ibrahim narrates from Jafer e Sadiq (a.s.) that the Imam has said that Allah has created the angels differently. The Prophet of Allah has seen that the Angel Gabriel had six hundred arms and on his calf there are pearls as if they were drops of moisture on the green verdure. When the Prophet saw Gabriel he found him positioned between the sky and the earth. When Allah orders the Angel Mekail to come to the earth, he will have one of his feet on the Seventh Sky and the other he puts on the earth. Then Hazrat Ali (a.s) said, Allah has created such angels that half their bodies are made of ice and the other half of fire. The supplication of these angels is, ‘ O Almighty Allah, Who has created compatibility between the fire and the ice! Keep us steadfast in our prayer!’

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) also said, “ The angels do not eat or drink nor do they mate for procreation. Their lives are like the breeze of the Firmament. There are certain angels who will remain in the position of *Ruku* (Obeisance) for ever. Some others are in the state of *Sajda* (Prostration).Every night 70,000 angels descend to the earth and circumambulate the *Kaaba*, offer their respects to the Prophet (a.s.), to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and then visit the Mausoleum of Imam Hussain (a.s) and circumambulate there. Early in the morning they ascend into the Firmament. Thus every morning a fresh batch of angels descends to the earth and this practice goes on an on.

There is a reliable tradition that someone asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), “ Are the angels more in numbers than the humans?”

The Imam replied, “ By Allah who has the authority over my life, only the angels that are on the sky are more in number than the particles of dust on the earth. There is no place in the sky where there are no angels. They are all engrossed in the worship of Allah. There is no plant or a clod on the land where the angels are not there who have been appointed as guardian angels (*Muwakkil)* for that spot. They report to Allah every day about the goings on there. It is true that Allah knows everything but the angels, through the love for the *Ahl alBayt,* wish to have the opportunity of going closer to the Almighty.

Ibne Babawiyah narrates through a reliable source that Zainab Attarah went one day to the Holy Prophet (a.s.) and inquired about the excellence of Allah's creations.

The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " The earth, with all its contents, and in relation to the one below it, is like a ring or a bangle lying in a forest. These two, in relation to the third, are also looking the same way. The situation is similar till the seventh earth"

Then the Prophet (a.s.) recited the following verse:

"*Khalaqa saba samawatin wa minalarze mislahunna- Allah created seven skies and similarly the earths."*

These seven strata of the earth, on the back of a fowl, with their contents look like the rings lying in the forest. One side of the fowl is in the east and the other in the west. This fowl is located over a wide rock that in relation to the earths, with all their contents, appear like rings lying in a forest. The wide rock is lying on back of a fish, and in relation to its width, all the things lying on it look like rings in a forest. The fish is located in a dark sea and in relation to its width, the things lying on it seem like rings in a forest. And below this sea is the *Sara* (The Nether Region). In relation to the Nether Region all other things look like rings lying on the floor of a forest.

The Holy Quran says:

" Lahoo mafis-samawate wa mafilarde wa ma bainahuma wa ma tahtassara- It is for Him what all is in the skies and on the earth and what all is in between them and what is in the Nether Region."

All these things, in relation to the first sky, are like circles or rings that are lying in a forest. This sequence repeates itself till the seventh sky..And all these earths and skies, in relation to the *Dariya e Makfoof ( )*, are like circles and the *Dariya e Makfoof* in relation to *Koh e Tagrak* too is like a circular ring. Then all these strata, in relation to the *Hijab e Noor* are also like rings. There are seventy *Hijab e Noor* that are so bright that one cannot look at them with the eyes.. All these things are like circles in front of the *Kursi*
(The Chair).

The Quran says:

" *Waseya Kursihus samawate wal ardh- His Chair is more extensive than the skies and the earth.*"

THE NINTH FUNDAMENTAL
THE MEANINGS OF TENDER AND OMNISCIENT

The word *lateef* (tender) is used in four contexts.:

1. *Lateef* could be a thing that is very thin and not visible to the eyes. This word can be an attribute for Allah that the human eyes cannot see Him.
2. The artisan who manufactures delicate things too is referred to in the Arabic lexicon as *lateef*. Because Allah is the Creator of all the things, the smallest like the mosquito and the largest like the mountains, and is not visible to the humans, He is referred to as *Lateef*.
3. The one who has profuse knowledge of *lateef* (delicate) and *daqeeq* (minute) things is called *lateef*.
4. The word *lateef* has its root in the word *lutf* that means kindness. Therefore, one who is kind is referred to as *Lateef*.

The word *Khabeer* is used in two contexts:

1..*Khabeer,* the pronoun,that means one who is aware of everything.
2. *Khabeer,* in the sense of one who informs or gives information.

The attributes of Allah, including those of *Lateef and Khabeer,* are not ancient that they existed before Allah. Otherwise Allah would not be the Creator of all these attributes. All these Attributes are specifically His and He has selected them at His own pleasure. His creatures, in times of need, call Him with his Attributes, like, *Sami (One Who Hears), Baseer (One Who Sees), Qadir (One Who is Empowered), Hai O Qayyum (One Who is and shall Be), Lateef O Khabeer (The Delicate and the Omniscient) etc.*

Some misguided critics say that the human beings too use these names, and therefore they become sharers in these attributes with Allah. This is a misnomer, because despite men being called with these names, the meaning and context is absolutely different. For example, Allah is addressed with the name *Aalim* (meaning the learned). IN THE CASE OF Allah the learning is not acquired learning. In the case of humans, learning is acquired. When a man is called *aalim,* he would have gone through the hard process of acquiring knowledge starting from the stage when he was *jaahil* (unlettered) to the stage when he is accepted as a learned person (*the aalim).* And, if for some reason he loses his learning, he might revert to the status of being called a *Jaahil.*

THE TENTH FUNDAMENTAL
THE OMNIPOTENT

Every thing in the Universe, small, big, elementary or complex owes its existence to Allah. There is nothing about which Allah has no knowledge. All the philosophers and thinkers agree on one point that Allah has knowledge of and control over everything. He has control over the Universe and Has the Power to create any number of such entities. But, because he is the Ultimate Philosopher-Thinker, He, perhaps, thought to create the only existing Universe. He could have created the human being with more than two arms, but His Expedience was that provision of only two arms to man was sufficient for his physical existence. In any of Allah's creations there is no pronounced defect. Allah, Who has created the Universe with the utterance of the monosyllable, *Kun* (l et there be!), and the Universe came about.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) narrated that when Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) went to the Mount of Toor he requested Allah to show to him His treasures.

Allah said, " O Moosa! My treasure is in the fact that I ask for anything to happen, saying *Kun,* and that thing happens instantaneously.

Doubting Allah's Omnipotence is heresy for a believer. The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " O Abu Dharr! After understanding Allah and acquiring Faith in His Attributes, one has to bear witness that I am the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) sent by Him to give to the people the Message about the Bounties in store for the believers and extreme retribution for the unbelievers and heretics.

"Allah has given to me the beacon with which I guide people away from the darkness of ungodly ways and heresy."

One of the most important pillars of Islamic Faith is bearing witness that Mohammed Sal Allaho wa Alaihi wa Sallam is the Prophet of Allah. This shall be discussed at some length in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4
THE BENEFITS
THE FIRST BENEFIT: NEED FOR THE EXISTENCE OF THE PROPHET

It is a fact that Allah did not have any Personal interest in the creation of the Universe because He is above all considerations of wants and wishes. He has created the world with all its wonders to be exploited by His noblest of creatures, man!

It is therefore natural that the human beings, to achieve excellence, needed a mentor, endowed with all the superior qualities by none other than the Creator. The mentor had the duty of bringing out the human beings from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge through the Guidance received by way of Revelations. It was also necessary for the mentor and guide to be one of the humankind that his compatriots feel comfortable with him and at the same time he had to be endowed with Spiritual Excellence received through Revelations from Allah.

It is recorded that a fire-worshipper came to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) and asked him some questions. One of his questions was that why there was a need for Allah to send a Prophet, a Messenger?

The Imam (a.s.) replied to him thus: " I have already explained to you about the Existence of Almighty Allah. He is the Creator of everything and all the living creatures in the universe. Everything happens in the universe with His wish. His creations cannot see him with their eyes. Their senses cannot gauge Him. He has no body that one could go to His physical presence and converse with Him. Therefore, it was imperative that there should be a medium through which His Guidance could be communicated to the human race for treading the right path. Therefore Allah's selected few, who were termed *nabis,* prophets or messengers, were the possessors of Allah's most desired characters and were of the same race and physical features as their flocks. These messengers have been endowed with certain *maujezas,* or incredible miracles like bringing back the dead to life, restoring eye-sight to the blind, curing incurable ailments, breaking the moon into two, bringing back the sun which had already set etc, etc. The world has never been devoid of such *nabis.* If at a time there is no *nabi,* then there will be his vicegerents to carry on the work of the Mentor.

Man is a gregarious being. Every individual is dependent on the others for his needs. This need sometimes becomes the cause of conflict, differences and even wars. Therefore he needs a ruler who acts as a *Hakm,* or arbiter, whose verdicts are fair and above all personal considerations and is infallible. .Such a *Hakm* can only be identified and put in place by none other than the Great Creator, Allah.

Therefore it is cardinal that the *Nabi* and the *Imams* are *mansus-min-Allah* or selected and appointed by Almighty Allah.

THE SECOND BENEFIT: MAUJEZA OR MIRACLE

As a proof of Prophet hood, the Prophets' present miracles to the people. These miracles are incredible happenings that the commoners are unable to perform. For example: converting the staff into a snake, making the dead alive, breaking the moon into two etc… etc…

When a person claims to be the messenger of God and performs miracles as a proof, then there will not remain any doubt as to his veracity. To the contrary, when an imposter claims that he is a prophet, then it is impossible that Allah would provide him the means of performing any miracle. As people believe in the veracity of a Prophet by witnessing the miracles, so also people believe in him by hearing about the miracles through authentic sources. It is just like people who have not seen a city, say for example Mecca, believe in its existence only on hearing about it from others.

THE THIRD BENEFIT: THE PROPHETHOOD OF THE LAST MESSENGER

The Prophet (a.s.) of the last epoch, the cause of the creation of the Universe Hazrat Mohammed Mustafa Sallallah alaihi wa aalaihi wa sallam, has manifested innumerable miracles. Besides all those miracles the most prominent is the Holy Quran that he had presented to his followers as a miracle after declaring himself the Prophet of Allah. He had challenged the erudite scholars of the day to present a book equal in quality, or even a verse equivalent to any of the verses of the Quran. None of the scholars of that time was able to meet the challenge but in frustration, they prepared to fight with the Prophet and his supporters.

Ibne Babawia relates that Ibnal Sakeet, a renowned scholar went to Imam Raza (a.s.) and asked him that Allah had given to Moosa (a.s.) the Staff and the Shining Hand (Y*ad e Baidah*), to Hazrat Isa (a.s.) and the miracle of healing and what miracles had Allah given to our Prophet (a.s.).

Imam Raza (a.s.) replied that when Allah gave Prophet hood to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.), the art of magic was at a peak. There used to be competitions of the magicians those days. Therefore Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) was provided with a miracle that could subdue the magic of those masters. Hazrat Moosa's staff had such incredible power that it could swallow the snakes created by the magicians through their magical spell. This event proved the Prophet hood of Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) and the very same magicians accepted him as the true Prophet. Hazrat Isa (a.s)'s period was the time when the art of treatment of the sick was at its peak. Expert physicians were living in that area those days. Therefore Allah

gave to Hazrat Isa (a.s.) the miracle of curing serious ailments. For example he could bring back the dead to life and give eyesight to congenital blind persons. Hazrat Isa (a.s.) performed all these miracles and therefore the people accepted him as the Prophet of Allah.

During the times of our Prophet (a.s.), the Arab scholars and poets were at the height of their erudition. The poets used to vie with each other in composing poems of great quality and hanging them on the door of *Kaaba* for people to read and give their learned comments on them. Therefore Allah provided to the Prophet (a.s.) the Book that rendered all those scholars and poets helpless who claimed," *maa haada kalaam al bashr"*, this is not the work of any human being! Despite all this they prepared to confront and fight with the Prophet.

Ibnal Sakeet said," No doubt you have said the right thing. Now, kindly tell me who is the Vicegerent (*hujjat e Khuda*) of the time?"

The Imam (a.s) replied," Allah has provided you intelligence. Make use of this intelligence, think and search the one who is disseminating the word of Allah to the people and showing to them the right path. Also use your intelligence to recognize those who are Allah's enemies. If you really use your intelligence, you will definitely identify the *hujjat e Khuda."*

Besides this there are innumerable miracles of the Prophet (a.s.), for example:
The breaking of the moon,
A tree coming to the Prophet and speaking with him and returning back to its original place on his orders,
Water gushing forth from his fingers that was sufficient to quench the thirst of his men and animals,
The pebbles in his hands speaking,
Small quantity of food sufficing for a large gathering,
The Jins accepting his suzerainty,
The sun emerging back immediately after setting,
The camel protesting about its master to him,
Despite not receiving any formal education the Prophet (a.s.)'s knowledge of things present and past,
Giving correct news about things to happen,
For example
The conquest of Mecca,
The conquest of Khaibar,
The conquest of Rome and Persia,
Aisha, Talha, Zubair and Muawiya battling with Hazrat Ali (a.s.),
The sufferings of the Ahle Baith (a.s.) etc… etc…

If a person thinks over these qualities of the Prophet (a.s.), he will not have any doubt about accepting his Prophet hood. Similarly if a person makes a serious study of the jurisprudence brought by the Holy Prophet (a.s.), he will be convinced that these are the

laws provided by Allah and none else. Several Journals of the previous faiths have predicted about the coming of Prophet Mohammed (a.s.).

Imam Reza (a.s.) narrates that his father, Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), told him that a group of Jews came to him and asked him if he was the son of the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) who was the last of the Prophets?

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) replied:

- Yes!
- The Jews said," we have read in the Torah that God had given the Book to Abraham (a.s.) and his son and endowed them with the kingdom of the country. Then that dynasty continued. You say that you are the scions of the Prophet (a.s.). We see you weak and forlorn and others are in power. What is the reason for this?
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.)'s eyes watered and he said, " It has always been there that the Prophets (a.s.), their vicegerents and the men of piety had been oppressed and suppressed. They had been assassinated for no fault of theirs and the cruel people always dominated. Their following of faithful supporters too had always been very small.
- The Jews said, " The prophets and their descendents, without any formal education, have been endowed with immense knowledge to guide their flocks in this world on the Right Path and the Knowledge about their Creator. Have you too been endowed with such Learning?
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) told me, " O Moosa (a.s.)! Come to the front! Put your hand on my chest. Then he prayed, ' O Allah! In the name of Mohammed (a.s.) and his Progeny help this son of Your servant!' Then he told to the Jews, " Whatever you wish to know, ask this child."
- The Jews said, " What can we expect to learn from this little child who has not read anything nor is literate as yet?"
- The Imam (a.s.) said, " this is the son of an Imam (a.s.) and destined to be the Imam (a.s.) in the future. Please do ask him any question without any reservation."
- The Jews asked," What were the nine objects that were endowed to the Prophet Moosa (a.s) as his miracle?"
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.), a child of five years at that time, replied, "The nine things were the Staff, that could turn into a serpent when put on the ground, the *Yade Baida*
- *(The* luminous hand), that made everything shine when Moosa took it out of his robe, the swarms of locusts*,* the frog, the blood, infesting the people of Pharo with lice, suspending *Koh-e-Toor* (the mountain of Toor) over the heads of the Bani Israel, *Mann o Salwa* (Manna) falling from the sky for the sustenance of the Bani Israel, the sea parting into two making way for the Bani Israel to escape from the clutches of Pharo."
- The Jews said, " you are telling the truth!'. Then they asked, " Now tell us. What was the Miracle presented by the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that convinced his people to accept his Faith?"
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s) replied, " there are many miracles of the Prophet (a.s.). Listen and listen with care!

(1) Before the *Baasat* (annunciation) of the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) the Satans and the Jinns used to visit the earth from the skies and tell to the people about the events there. This phenomenon gave rise to many *Kaahins* (soothsayers). After the *Basat* a stop was put to this and the Satans and the Jinns were forbidden from leaving the earth at any time. Even then if they attempted to escape into the firmament they are prevented from doing so with the arrows of *Shehab* and the stars. The *Kaahins* were thus made ineffective.

(2) Also the *garg* (the wolf) bore witness to the Prophet hood of Mohammed (as mentioned earlier in this book while discussing about Abu Dharr.)

(3) The Prophet (a.s.) , during his childhood and youth was well known for his honesty and integrity.

(4) When Saif bin Ziyazn became the king of Ethiopia, and the group of Qureish in the company of Abdul Mutallib went to his court, he asked him certain questions about the Prophet (a.s.) and, after hearing the replies, said that he will soon be
the Prophet (a.s.) of your people. The group of the Qureish agreed that the qualities mentioned by the king were found in Mohammed (a.s.).

(5) When Abraha bin Yaksoom came to demolish the Kaaba with a retinue of elephants, Hazrat Abdul Mutallib said that there is One Guardian of this house and you cannot demolish it. Prior to that time Saif bin Ziyazan had made the prediction of the coming of the Prophet (a.s.). Therefore the people of Mecca prayed and Abraha could not demolish the Kaaba.

(6) One day the Prophet (a.s.) was relaxing near the wall of the Kaaba when Abu Jahl brought one large boulder to smash his head. But the boulder slipped off his hands. However much Abu Jahl tried to kill Mohammed (a.s.), he couldn’t do it.

(7)Abu Jahl had bought a camel from an Arab but was not paying the cost to the man. The Arab complained about this to the Qureish. In order to ridicule the Prophet (a.s.), they asked the Arab to go to him to intervene on his behalf with Abu Jahl. The Arab went to the Prophet (a.s.) and made his request. He took him to the house of Abu Jahl and knocked at his door. Abu Jahl came out. The Prophet (a.s.) told him,” Give the cost of the camel to this Arab.” Abu Jahl instantly made the payment. The Arab came to the Qureish and thanked them. They were really surprised and went to Abu Jahl and told him that as a jest, they had asked the Arab to go to Mohammed (a.s.) and ask him to request you to settle his payment. But they were surprised that he had agreed to pay. Abu Jahl said,” I was helpless! I had seen that Mohammed (a.s.) had with him an animal that was taller than any camel and was telling with its open mouth that I must pay to the Arab otherwise it would eat me.

(8) The Qureish of Mecca deputed Nazar bin al Haras and Uqba bin Abi Moheeth to Medina to do espionage on the Prophet (a.s). They informed that most of the impecunious

persons of the City are falling in line with the Prophet (a.s.). The Quriesh of Mecca then said,
“ Verily, Mohammed (a.s.) is the Prophet of Allah about whom we have read in the Books of Yore that a Prophet will rise amongst us who will endear himself to the poor and needy.”

(9) When the Prophet (a.s.) migrated from Mecca, Queriesh sent Saraqa bin Jaitham to Medina to cause harm to him. When he saw him arrive, the Prophet (a.s.) prayed to Allah to protect him from the evil person. Suddenly the feet of the steed of the man got embedded into the ground and he cried, “ O Mohammed (a.s.)! Kindly come to my rescue! I shall never ever think of harming you!”The Prophet (a.s.) prayed to Allah that if the person was honest in what he said, then he must be relieved of his hardship. The feet of the horse came out of the ground and the person returned to Mecca.

(10) Aamir bin Tufail and Zaid bin Qais came to the Prophet (a.s.) and Aamir told to Zaid that while he engaged Mohammed (a.s.) in conversation, the other should look for the opportunity to cut his head with the sword. Therefore Aamir kept the Prophet (a.s) engrossed in the conversation but Zaid couldn’t complete his task. When they came out, Aamir told to Zaid, “ You are a cowardly person that you had broken your resolve!” Zaid said, “ I didn’t see anyone there besides you. If I had swung the sword, I would have beheaded you!”

(11) Zaid bin Qais and Nazr bin Haras came to the Prophet (a.s.) to find out if the Prophet (a.s.) had knowledge of hidden things. Before they could ask any question, the Prophet (a.s.) told to Zaid if he was the same person who visited the Prophet (a.s.) on a certain day along with Aamir with the evil intention of killing him. He was very surprised to hear this from the Prophet (a.s.) because no other mortal person knew about this plan other than the two conspirators. Then Zaid accepted Islam.

(12) Once a few Jews came to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and told him that they have some questions to be asked of his cousin, the Prophet (a.s.). Hazrat Ali (a.s.) sent their message to the Prophet (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) said, “ I am a humble creature of Allah! What questions those persons want to ask of me?” Then the Jews came to the presence of the Prophet (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) said, “ Do you want to put the question to me or would like me to tell you about what is in your minds!” They requested the Prophet to speak first. The Prophet (a.s.) said, “ The purpose of your visit to me is to ask about Dhual Qarnain!” The Jews admitted that their purpose of coming was to ask about that person. The Prophet (a.s.) then rejoined saying, “ Dhual Qarnai was a native of the city of Rome. When he grew up, he became the suzerain of the East and the West. In the end he constructed a huge wall which is famous even now.!” The Jews were very much impressed and embraced Islam.

(13) Wabasa bin Moid Asadi came to the Prophet (a.s.) with a thought that he would ask such an intricate question that the answer would not be possible. He told to the Prophet (a.s.), “ Tell me about the things that are good and also tell me about those that are evil?” The Prophet (a.s.) replied in two small sentences. He put his hand on the chest of Wabasa

and said, “ A thing is good if it satisfies your conscience and your heart bears witness that it is good. The evil thing is one of which your heart is in doubt. However much you wish to do it, your heart stops you from doing it.”

(14) The group of Abdul Qais visited the Prophet (a.s.). After exchanging greetings the Prophet (a.s.) asked them to show to him the dates they carried with them from their place. Everyone of the group put his product before the Prophet (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) inspected each date carefully and told about the variety it belonged to. The group was surprised that the Prophet (a.s.) knew so much about their place that he was able to identify the variety of dates grown by each individual. Then they told to the Prophet (a.s) that they had their maternal uncle accompanying them. He was suffering some mental disorder. The Prophet (a.s.) asked for a sheet of cloth to be brought. He put the sheet on the head of the afflicted person and said thrice, “ O enemy of Allah! Don’t trouble this person!”The insane person turned sane immediately. The group was having a sheep along with them. The Prophet (a.s.) pressed on one of the ears of the animal. It developed a mark on the ear pressed by the Prophet (a.s.). Even to this day the sheep of that breed continue to have similar mark on one of their ears.

(15) During a journey, the Prophet (a.s.) noticed that a camel was very tired. He put a little quantity of his saliva into the mouth of the animal. The camel became very active and trotted on faster than the other camels in the caravan.

(16) During another journey, a camel of one of the companions of the Prophet (a.s.) was lost. The owner of the animal asked the Prophet (a.s) that if he was the Messenger of Allah, he should inform about the whereabouts of the camel. The Prophet (a.s.) said that the camel was at such and such a place because its nose-string was entangled on the branch of a tree. The person went to the place and retrieved his camel.

(17) One camel complained to the Prophet (a.s.) that it was getting very bad treatment from its master. The Prophet (a.s.) asked the owner of the camel to sell it away to someone else. The camel again protested to the Prophet (a.s) that he should be sold to a good person that it received better treatment. Then the Prophet (a.s.) asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to buy the camel. This camel was in the use of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) during the Battle of Siffin.

(18) One day the Prophet (a.s.) was sitting in the Mosque when a camel came running towards him. The camel put its head in the lap of the Prophet (a.s.) and started wailing. The Prophet (a.s.) told to his companions that the animal was complaining that its master wanted to butcher it. One of the companions affirmed that the camel belonged to a person who intended cutting it for the feast in connection with the wedding (*Walima)* of his son. The Prophet (a.s.) called the person and recommended to him to spare the life of the camel.

(19) Once the Prophet (a.s.) was unhappy with the Tribe of Mudar and prayed for famine in their area. The famine was so severe that the people came running to the Prophet a.s.) and asked for his pardon. Again the Prophet (a.s.) prayed to Allah for His Kindness on the

Tribe of Mudar. There was such torrential rain that the people of Medina came to him asking him to pray for the cessation of the showers. Then the clouds moved away from Medina and rained in the environs for the next one month.

(20) Before the Annunciation (*Baasat)* of the Prophet (a.s.) Hazrat Abu Talib took him along on a journey to Syria. The caravan halted near the hermitage of the Hermit, Bahira Rahab. Rahab was a scholar of the Divine Books and had read that a Prophet would pass through that way at a particular time. When he saw the caravan, he arranged a feast for them. To his disappointment, Rahab didn't find anyone fitting into the description of a prophet in the group. He asked the people of the caravan if they had left anyone near their luggage outside the hermitage. They affirmed that there is an orphaned child stationed near the luggage. Rahab rushed to the spot and found the orphan asleep near the luggage and a cloud was hovering over his head. Rahab said that the child was the orphaned jewel. He also affirmed that this child was the last of the chain of Prophets of Allah and that he would soon be annunciated. The Qureish were surprised to hear this and started holding the Prophet in esteem.

This story traveled fast to Mecca and therefore Hazrat Khadija binte Khawilad expressed her wish of matrimony with him turning down proposals of other prominent persons of Mecca. Thus she was blessed to be the consort of the Prophet of Islam (a.s.).

(21) Before the Migration (*Hegira)* the prophet (a.s.) asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to request Hazrat Khadija to prepare some food. She did it. The Prophet (a.s.) invited his close relatives, forty in number, to partake of the food with him. He asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to lay the food. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) brought forth the food that was sufficient for three persons and requested the gathering of forty guests to say *Bismillah (* in the name of Allah) and start to eat. The guests did not say *Bismillah* but the Prophet (a.s.) uttered these words and started to eat. The entire gathering of forty ate the food to their fill. Abu Jahl said, " Mohammed (a.s.) has performed a great magic. The food for three persons sufficed for the large gathering! What could be a bigger magic than this!" The prophet (a.s.) again invited the same group after a few days and sated them with the food sufficient for three persons!

(22) Hazrat Ali (aa.s.) has said that he went to the market and bought meat, flour of one Dirham each and brought home to Fatima Zehra (a.s.), the Prophet (a.s)'s Daughter, asking her to prepare the food that the Prophet (a.s.) was to join them for the meal. Then he went to the Prophet (a.s) who was busy praying for provision against hunger of the people! Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " O Prophet of Allah! The food is ready. Please do accompany me to have your meal." He took the Prophet (a.s.) home. The Prophet (a.s.) told to his daughter, " Bring the food to me." When the food was laid in front of him, he covered it with a sheet of cloth and prayed to Allah. Then he took out nine bowls of the soup and nine *naans* and sent to his wives. Then he asked Fatima (a.s.), her husband, Ali (a.s.) and the children to eat out of the food. He then sent portions to the neighbors and sufficient quantity of food was left thereafter to suffice for many days.

(23) The wife of Abdallah Muslim sent to the Prophet (a.s.) meat of a goat marinated and cooked with poison. At that time Bashar bin Baraa was with the Prophet (a.s.) who ate the meat. The Prophet (a.s.) said that the goat is telling that it has been cooked in venom. After a while Bashar died of the poisoning. The Prophet (a.s.) called the woman and asked her why she laced the meat with poison. She said that the prophet (a.s.) was the cause of the killing of her husband and many others of her tribe. She had thought that if he were a king like any other king, he would consume the meat and die. But if he were the Prophet (a.s.), Allah would forewarn him.

(24) Jabir bin Abdallah Ansari says that on the day of the Battle of *Khandaq* (the trench), they were busy digging the trench when the group felt very hungry and the Prophet (a.s.) was extremely famished as well. Jabir rushed to his house and asked his wife to prepare some food for the Prophet (a.s.). She got ready some cooked meat and a few *naans (*pieces of bread). Jabir then went to the Prophet (a.s.) and requested him to come to his house to partake of the food. The Prophet (a.s.) asked the entire group of the companions to accompany him to Jabir's house to have food. Jabir was very worried that he would face embarrassment because of grossly insufficient food available at his place for the group. He approached his wife and said, " There are so many guests with us, how can we serve all of them?" His wife asked him, " Did you invite them or the Prophet (a.s.) has himself asked them to join him?" Jabir said, " The Prophet (a.s.) himself has asked the persons to come." His wife, who was a pious lady, said, " then why do you worry! The Prophet (a.s) knows better than you!" The Prophet (a.s.) then asked Jabir about the quantity of food available at the time. Jabir informed that he had some meat and a few *naans.* The Prophet (a.s.) asked Jabir to lay the food in a dish and put a sheet of cloth over it. Then take out one *naan* and some meat and distribute to each individual. Jabir complied. To Jabir's surprise all the 3,000 troops were served with the food and even some food remained thereafter!

(25) Saad bin Ibada came to the presence of the Prophet (a.s.) one day when he was observing a fast. He invited the Prophet (a.s.) and Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to break the fast at his place. The Prophet (a.s.) accepted the invitation and went with Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to break the fast at Saad's place. After breaking the fast, the Prophet (a.s.) offered the prayer. When the prophet (a.s.) was leaving for home, Saad presented him with an unbroken horse. But miraculously the horse became very docile. The food prepared in Saad's house that day lasted for many days thereafter.

(26) When the prophet (a.s.) returned after signing the *treaty of Hudaibiya* he passed near a well along the way, that was almost dry. He ordered that none should go near the well till he permitted them to do so. Then he called for some water, took it in his mouth and put it in the well. The water in the well swelled up and reached to the parapet of the well. All the troops and the animals with them quenched their thirst to the full.

(27) Whatever information the Prophet (a.s.) had given about the coming days had all come true.

(28) When the Prophet (a.s.) related the events of the *Shab e Meraj*, the hypocrites questioned their veracity. The Prophet (a.s.) then related to the hypocrites all that happened to them that night in his absence. This made them quiet..

(29) In the *Battle of Tabook* the Prophet (a.s.)'s troops ran out of water. They cried *al-atash! Al-atash* (thirst! thirst!). The Prophet (a.s.) asked if anyone of them had some water. Abu Huraira brought a pitcher of water. The Prophet (a.s.) put some water in a goblet, put up his hands and prayed. Thereafter he put his fingers in the goblet. When he brought out his hand from the goblet, water started gushing out of his finger. All the troops and their animals quenched their thirst and filled their pots and goblets for the rest of the journey.

(30) The Prophet (a.s.) noticed the sister of Abdallah bin Rawaha carrying something in her hands. He asked her as to what she was taking with her and where she was heading for. She said she was taking some dates for her brother. He called her near him, and distributed the dates to the persons who were at that moment digging the trench. Everyone ate the dates to his fill and therewere sufficient remaining for the girl to take with her.

(31) During another journey, the Prophet (a.s.)'s party ran out of food supplies. The companions were restless with hunger. He asked if anyone had any food left, should bring it to him. Everyone put forth whatever was left with him. The total quantity was about 500 grams of dates. He put all that in a container, and offered a prayer. The dates increased so much in quantity that the entire group had sufficient to eat till they arrived at Medina.

(32) In one journey the Prophet (a.s.)'s party ran out of water. They discovered a dry well on the way. The Prophet (a.s.) put his saliva in the dry well that instantly got filled with water from its springs and everyone quenched his thirst. This information reached all the corners of Arabia. The *Imposter Masleema* too put his saliva into a well. The well suddenly dried up of water and never had any water in the future.

(33) Once the steed of Saraqa bin Jaasim got stuck in a morass. The Prophet (a.s.) prayed to Allah and the horse came out of the marsh. On reaching home, Saraqa presented a sheep to the Prophet (a.s.) that was neither bearing nor giving milk. The Prophet touched its udders and it started giving milk.

(34) Once the Prophet (a.s.) was a guest at the place of a woman, by name, *Umm Shareek.* The woman brought to the Prophet (a.s.) a leathern container that had a small quantity of rancid oil. The Prophet (a.s.) prayed and the container got filled with good oil that never got reduced in quantity..

(35). When the Verse of *Tabbat* about Abu Lahab and his wife was Revealed, then *Umm Jamil,* his wife, was furious and she carried a big boulder with the intention of harming the Prophet (a.s.). Abu Bakr informed the Prophet (a.s.) that *Umm Jamil* was heading towards him with the stone. The Prophet (a.s.) said, " Let her come! Allah takes care of

me!!” When she came near Abu Bakr, she asked him, “ Where is Mohammed (a.s.) ?” Abu Bakr replied that he didn’t know. Disappointed, she went away. Abu Bakr asked the Prophet (a.s.), “ Despite being here, how is that you were not visible to her?” The Prophet (a.s.) said, “ My Allah had erected a curtainm between me and her at that moment!”

Then Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) told to the Jews there is a book that has recorded all the Miracles performed by the Prophet of Islam (a.s.). This Book is a witness of all the earlier Divine Books.

The Jews said, “ You have recounted all these miracles. What is the guarantee that they are aunthentic or not?”

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) retorted, “ What is the proof of the Miracles of the Prophet Moses (a.s.) that you recount?”

The Jews said, “ These accounts have reached us through noble and truthful people of our tribe. That is why we consider them authentic!”

The Imam (a.s.) said, all the Miracles recounted to you have also been received from truthful and pious persons. Further, they have been recounted to you by a child of five years, who at his age, cannot receive any worldly instruction or learning except through the Divine will of Allah. Hearing this, they all expressed, “ We bear witness that there is no god but Allah, Mohammed (a.s) is his Prophet and you are his Vicegerent of the time!”

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) got up and kissed the forehead of his son and said, “ No doubt! You will be the Vicegerent of the Prophet (a.s.) after me!”

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THE FOURTH BENEFIT
THE LAST OF THE PROPHETS OF ALLAH

Our Prophet, Hazrat Mohammed Sal Allah Alaihi wa Aalehi wa Sallam, through the *Nuss* (Definitive word) of the Quran, is not only the Prophet (a.s.) of the *Humans and the Jinns* but there is not going to be any other Prophet after him. He is totally free of any sins, minor or major, and is *Masoom* (innocent). There are reliable traditions to prove that from his first ancestors, Adam and Eve, up to him, all the generations, were free of polytheism and infidelity. They have always been the noblest, respected and learned of all their contemporaries. Some vested interests, in order to protect their own leaders, have spread the calumny that some of the Prophet’s elders were *kafir* (infidels). There are examples of people who have even gone to the extent of saying that some of the prophets were *kafir* and not innocent. The Jews too have blamed some of the prophets of

committing *maasi* (minor sins) and, therefore the prophets too became sinners along with their own leaders who committed sins.

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THE FIFTH BENEFIT:
THE EXCELLENCE & THE QUALITIES OF THE PROPHET

Ibne Babawiyah narrates from Imam Reza (a.s.) asked Hind ibne Abi Hala about the appearance and personality of the Prophet. Hind said, " The Prophet (a.s.) had an imposing personality. The face was radiant that it would put the full moon to shame! He was of average height--- neither too tall nor short. His head was neither big nor small and the hair was somewhat curly and soft. When the hair on his head used to grow, after tonsuring, he would part them in the middle to facilitate anointing while performing the ablution. Tonsuring of the head was not fashionable in Arabia of those days and, generally people did this during *Haj* and *Umra.* The Prophet (a.s.) had a fair complexion, wide forehead and pronounced eyebrows. There was a vein between the two eyebrows that used to become prominent when he was excited for something. His beard was dense and had an average sized mouth. Arabs don't consider it good to have small mouths. The Prophet (a.s.)'s teeth were very bright and beautiful. His teeth were having clefts between them. On his chest there was a growth of soft hair. His neck was bright and long and gave one the impression as if it is made of silver. His body was neither thin nor heavy. His bones were strong; his stomach and chest were flat. The prophet (a.s)'s hands were long and big. His gait was neither that of a proud person nor feminist. He used to walk with gravity, poise and with slight bow of the head. While speaking with anyone, he would be polite and soft. While looking at anyone, he would have affection reflecting from his eyes. He used to take precedence in greeting others. His talk used to be short and meaningful. He used to refrain from unnecessary talk. He would be seldom angry on any one and was never profuse in praising good food. He used to thank Allah for every bounty, big or small. For upholding the truth, he would not have any consideration for a friend or foe.

While experiencing anything enjoyable, the Prophet (a.s.) would be moderate in his praise. His laughter would be limited to a smile when a part of his bright teeth would be exposed to view.

Imam Hussain (a.s.) says that he inquired of his father, Hazrat Ali (a.s.), about the treatment meted out by the Prophet (a.s.) to his immediate kin. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied, " At home the Prophet (a.s.) would divide his time into three. One part he would spend in prayer. The second part was reserved for meeting the inmates of his house and the third part of his time was for rest and relaxation. In the time apportioned for relaxation, the Prophet (a.s.) used to meet his companions and others who wished to seek clarifications from him on different matters of personal or general interest.

His practice was that he would give audition first to those companions who were more pious. He used to give profuse attention to the questions and demands made by his visitors. While giving advice on Spiritual and Religious matters, he would ask his visitors to disseminate the information to others in their circle. If a person is invalid and for some reason was unable to come personally to the Prophet (a.s.), he asked his visitors to communicate his queries to him and take back the replies to the person. The Reward for this would not only be for the person who sought the clarifications but more for the person who had been the vehicle of carrying the information."

Then Imam Hussain (a.s.) inquired about the way the Prophet carried himself while going out of his residence.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied, " While away from home, the Prophet (a.s.) would not talk much, except on matters of interest and benefit to people. He used to exhort people to maintain amity and affection amongst each other. When elders of other tribes visited, he would treat them with due respect. He used to give the tidings of Rewards for good acts to everyone. Praising the pious, he used to encourage them to more piety. He used to respect very much the persons who had sympathy for the Muslims. When he saw or heard about the sinful acts (*ma-aasi*) he used to express his sorrow and encourage the person to turn towards good deeds. "

Imam Hussain (a.s.) then asked his father about how the Prophet (a.s.) carried himself at group meetings. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied, " While going for a meeting, and returning from one, the Prophet (a.s.) would offer a Prayer. He never looked for any particular place to sit in a meeting. Wherever he found some space at the venue, he would squat. Generally he liked to be in the last row. He also advised people not to vie with one another to get a vantage place to sit in a meeting. He used to deal with such affection with everyone at a meeting that they used to get overwhelmed with his personal attention. Those who asked questions, would never go disappointed or dissatisfied. His behavior was such that all those who interacted with him, friends or foes, would praise him. He was kind on people the way a parent would be on his own children. His meetings would be highlighted with patience, straightforwardness, honesty and integrity. None was allowed to do backbiting of others at his meetings. There used to be a very high degree of amity and goodwill that people used to discuss each others' problems and solve them with mutual help."

Imam Hussain (a.s.) further asked about the treatment meted out by the Prophet (a.s.) to those who were present at his meetings.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " The Prophet (a.s.) used to speak softly and kindly with everyone. He would never, overtly or covertly, hurt anyone's feelings. He wouldn't disappoint or neglect even a sworn enemy who came to meet him. He disliked three things that he always refrained from, viz: debate (*munazera)*, dispute (*Mujadela)* and unnecessary talk. He always tried to avoid tasks which were not beneficial..

The Prophet (a.s.) also shunned three things about the people: 1. He never criticized anyone. 2. Never aired others failings. 3. Never chased others for their failings.

Whenever the Prophet (a.s.) started speaking, he would have the rapt attention of the audience. People never found fault with whatever he spoke. His talk would be replete with good advice. Whenever a rustic person came to the meeting and behaved improperly, he used to ask his companions to bear with him. He gave particular attention to such persons to listen to them and to solve their problems. While others spoke, he would never intervene or interrupt till the persons completed their talk."

Imam Hussain (a.s.) also asked the reason for the tranquility and quiet of the Prophet.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied, "The Prophet (a.s.)'s tranquility was of four types:

When the other person was unreasonable, he would listen with *patience.* Whenever he felt that there was a chance of hurt in speaking out, he would maintain a discreet silence for the time. He had made such a good combination of patience and forbearance that he would never get angry for any reason whatsoever.

Besides the above, the Prophet (a.s.) had four other very pronounced qualities:

1. He would continue and perpetuate the good deeds that the people get motivated too to perform good deeds to emulate their Master.
2. He shunned all undesirable acts and his followers did likewise.
3. For the benefit of his following, he would uphold good counsel.
4. He was steadfast on the path of good for this world and the Hereafter.

Mohammed Yaqub Kulaini narrates from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that the Prophet (a.s.) had three qualities that have never been found in anyone else:

1. His body never cast a shadow.
2. Wherever he went, he left behind a fragrance that lingered for the next three days. This was the sign for people to know that the Prophet (a.s.) had passed that way.
3. Whenever he passed near a rock or a tree, it appeared as if these things were prostrating before him.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that in the darkness of night his face used to radiate like the full moon. Therefore whichever way he passed its environs would become bright.

It is narrated that one of his wives lost a needle in the night when it was dark. When the Prophet (a.s.) came home, everything became bright in the surroundings and the needle was recovered. His sweat used to be so fragrant that sometimes it used to be difficult on the sense of smell. Whenever he rinsed his mouth, the water used for the purpose would become fragrant. No birds ever flew over his head. The Prophet (a.s.) had a unique faculty of seeing things behind his back. Whenever he exposed the Seal of Prophet hood on his back, it used to shine like the sunlight. No one ever noticed his stools because the earth used to hide it. Whichever animal he used for his travelling, it never aged.

Whenever the Prophet (a.s.) passed near any tree, it used to bow down in obeisance. Flies and mosquitoes never sat on his body.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says that the Prophet (a.s) had never eaten any bread made out of wheat. He did not eat bread made out of barley more than three times a day. At the time of the Prophet (a.s.)'s death, his armour was under a mortgage with a Jew for four Dhiram. Although he was ruling over the entire Arabia he did not have any gold, silver or other valuables. One day the Prophet (a.s.) distributed three hundred thousand dhiram received in reparation of war. In the night one needy person came and asked for help. The Prophet (a.s.) said," By Allah! Today in the house of Mohammed (a.s.) there isn't a single dhiram or a pound of barley!

It is said that the Prophet (a.s.) used to ride on the naked backs of the horses. He used to repair his own foot ware. The Prophet (a.s) always used to take precedence in greeting others.. He used to squat with the slaves on the ground and eat food with them. He used to say with pride that he was the biggest slave of his Creator, Allah, because He has endowed his choicest blessings on him. He took particular care to go and inquire about the health of indisposed beggars and slaves. He always made it a point to attend the burial of the dead.
Reliable sources narrate that once an Angel approached the Prophet (a.s.) and conveyed Allah's Message," If you wish we shall convert the land of Mecca to gold for you!"
The Prophet (a.s.) raised his head towards the sky and said," O my Sustainer! It is the wish of Mohammed (a.s.) that he gets sufficient nutrition at a time that he busies himself in Your worship and for the second meal he craved for your providing him sustenance to continue his supplications!"

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," After bearing witness to my Prophet hood the most important thing for my followers is the love and affection for my Ahl al Bayt." Therefore the verse of Tatheer has been revealed as a part of the Holy Quran in the praise of the Ahl al Bayt..

CHAPTER: 5

REFULGENCE OR RAYS OF LIGHT

THE FIRST RAY OF LIGHT: THE NEED FOR THE IMAM

The Imam is the empowered entity who has been appointed by Allah as the Vicegerent of the Prophet (a.s.) as guide for the spiritual and the temporal affairs of the believers. It has already been explained in the earlier chapter that guidance is not possible without the presence of the Prophet or his Vicegerents at all times.

Imam Raza (a.s.) has said that Allah has clearly ordered the people about the do's and don'ts. He has also warned that the people should not go against His Commandments and become cause of controversy and punishment. Therefore it is imperative that the people have a mentor ordained by Allah who can enforce the Commandments and guide the people. If this were not the case then everyone would go his own way running after selfish motives.

Allah, therefore, in His wisdom, has nominated an Imam (a.s.) for every period to prevent the people from discord and make them follow the norms laid down by Allah.

It is an established fact that no society or sect has functioned without a leader. Then how was it possible for the all-knowing Allah to leave His Creations without an Imam to guide them on the right path.

It is narrated that a group of people went to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). At that moment the Imam (a.s.) asked his student Hisham, to narrate the discussion he had with Umro bin Ubaid of Basra. Hisham said," O Son of the Prophet (a.s.)! I feel shy to speak in your presence."
The Imam (a.s.) said," you must comply with the orders of your Imam."
Hisham said," O Imam (a.s.)! There was a lot of talk about the erudition of Umro bin Ubaid in Basra and he used to lecture a group of Ahl e Sunnat. Having heard a lot about him I went to the Basra Mosque to listen to his talk. Umro was sitting proudly clad in the raiment of the learned. The people were asking him questions and he was answering them. I was seated in the back row. I stood up and asked him:

- O learned person! I am a traveller. Do I have your permission to ask you some questions.
- He replied," yes."
- I asked him," do you have eyes?"
- He replied," O son! What sort of question you asked? What reply can I give to this foolish question!"
- I said," Yes this is my question; please reply."
- He said," Yes I do have eyes."

- I asked him," What do you do with these eyes?"
- He said," I see with my eyes."
- I asked," Do you have a nose?"
- He said," yes."
- I asked him," What do you do with your nose."
- He replied," I distinguish between fragrant and foul smells with my nose."
- I asked him," Do you have a mouth?"
- He said," yes"
- I asked," What do you do with the mouth?"
- He replied," I find the taste of things through my mouth."
- I asked him," Do you have a tongue?"
- He said," yes."
- I asked," What do you do with your tongue?"
- He said," I speak through my tongue."
- I asked," Do you have ears?"
- He said," yes"
- I asked," What do you do with your ears?"
- He said," I hear with my ears."
- I asked," Do you have arms?"
- He replied," yes."
- I asked," What do you do with your arms?"
- He replied," I lift things with my arms."
- I asked," Do you have a heart?"
- He said," yes."
- I asked, " What do you do with your heart?"
- He replied," With the heart, I distinguish things that happen to the different parts of my body and the senses."
- I asked him," Are these limbs and senses subordinate to the heart?"
- He replied," yes."
- I said," How is it that in spite of being fit, the limbs and senses are dependent on the heart?"
- He replied," Whenever these parts of my body have a doubt about something they seek the advice of the heart to convert the doubt into clarity and decision."
- I asked," This means that Allah has provided the heart in the human body to make decisions when the limbs and the senses are in doubt?"
- He said," yes."
- I asked," O father of Marwan! God has not left the limbs and other parts of human body without the heart that controls and guides them. Is it possible that he would leave the world without an Imam or a guide?"
- The scholar of Basra sat quiet for a long while. Then he turned towards me and asked," Are you Hisham?"
- I replied," No."

- He asked,” Are you Hisham’s companion?”
- I replied,” No.”
- He asked,” Where do you hail from?”
- I replied,” I am an inhabitant of Kufa.”
- Hearing this he said,” Then! I have no doubt you are Hisham!” Then getting up he embraced me and made me sit near him. After this dialogue Umro refrained from making any remarks against the True Faith.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) smiled and asked,” O Hisham! Where did you learn all this?” Hisham said,” Master! These thoughts just came to my mind.”
The Imam (a.s.) said,” the things which came to you as an intuition are recorded in the books of Ibrahim and Moosa (a.s.).”

Imam Zainul Abedin (a.s.) has said,” we are the Vicegerents of Allah and the Prophet (a.s.) for the people of this world. We are the Masters of the pious and the shield against the retribution of Allah for them, the same way as the stars are the shields for the inhabitants of the sky. We are the people for whom, and because of whom, Allah has protected and kept the earth intact. With our intercession the rain falls. If the earth were devoid of us, the Imams (a.s.), then it would break and its inhabitants would perish in the debris. “

Then the Imam (a.s.) added, “ Ever since Allah created Adam (a.s.), the earth has never been without a Vicegerent (*Hujjat).* This *Hujjat* or *Caliph* of *Allah* has always been there, either publicly proclaimed or in the state of hiding. If such was not the case, then there wouldn’t have been the worshippers of *Allah* on this earth.”

The narrator adds that he asked the Imam (a.s.), “ O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! If the *Hujjat* or *Imam* remains in hiding, then what advantage will be there?”

The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ The Imam (a.s.) remaining in hiding is like the time when the sun goes into hiding. You do understand the advantage accruing while the sun remains in hiding!”

Jabir Jaafi narrates that he asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) about the need of the people for prophets and Imams.

The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ The Prophet (a.s.) or his Vicegerents are necessary for the human race to remain in a constant state of progress and protect them from Allah’s Punishment through their Intercession.”

Therefore, Allah has Himself observed, “ O My Habeeb (*the endearment Allah has used for the Prophet Mohammed*)! As long as you are on the earth, I shall not inflict My *azaab* (punishment) on its inhabitants” The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, “ The stars provide protection to the denizens of the skies so also my *Ahl al Bayt,* the members of my family, are a guarantee for the protection of the people of the earth. If the stars are

obliterated from the sky, the sky wouldn't exist. Similarly, if my Vicegerents are not on the earth, then the earth too would vanish."

The Prophet (a.s.)'s *Ahl al Bayt* is the group of Infallible members of the Prophet (a.s.)'s family about whom Allah says, " O believers! Obey Allah, His Prophet (a.s.) and the *Auli al Amr." Auli al Amr* are those Infallible persons who are free of all sin, are pure and *Masoom* or Innocent, and the chosen people of Allah.. Allah provides sustenance to the people with the blessings of these Infallible persons..The Ahl al Bayt are with the *Quran* and the *Quran* is with them.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " If only two persons remain on the earth, one of them would be the *Imam (a.s.)* of the time." He also said, " Hazrat Jibrael came to the Prophet (a.s.) and said, ' Allah has observed that He would not make the earth void of the Imams (a.s.) and the learned (*Aalams)* who would instruct the people the ways of obeying Me and following My Commands. .I shall not allow an interregnum between two Prophets (a.s.) that the people don't remain without Guidance. I shall not leave the Satan unfettered that he goes about misguiding the people and they remain without the Divine *Hadi,* the Guide. This Guide, either with his physical presence, or from hiding, would continue to provide guidance and advice to the believers.'"

The Imam (a.s.) also said, " Never shall this earth be without the person who will not warn the people who commit excesses in the Faith or make distortions *(thareef*) in the words, arrangement and interpretation or commentary of the *Quran.*

Besides everything, it is common sense that to keep the people of the world on the Right Path, an Imam, Guide and Leader is necessary at all times. It is also necessary that the *Imam (a.s.)* should be appointed by Allah (*Mansoos min Allah).*. When Allah has provided norms for every aspect of human life in the Book, then how would he leave the selection for the august office of the Imam to the discretion of the poor intellects of men.

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All the Prophets (a.s.) of the past themselves nominated their Vicegerents or successors. How is it possible that the Last Prophet (a.s.), the Most Immaculate of all the Prophets (a.s.) would keep quiet on the crucial aspect of succession after him. All the earlier prophets (a.s.) were certain that there would be Prophets to follow them. Even if they did not appoint their Vicegerents, their followers would not have remained without Divine Guidance. But the last of the Prophets (a.s.) knew that after him, till the Day of Reckoning, there would not be another Prophet to come. In these circumstances it was imperative for him to nominate a Line of Vicegerents who would keep his people Guided till the Final Day. The Prophet (a.s.) was so careful about his succession that whenever he was absent on his campaigns, he would take care to nominate a vicegerent to take care of the affairs in his absence. Then how was it possible that he would not prepare for his *Ghaebat e Kubra*, The Final Departure, from this world, without nominating his successor and vizier.. For his followers he has given the advice that every individual must draw a will when the time for departure from this world draws nigh, then how is it possible that he himself would have abruptly departed intestate from the world! There is

also a condition that the Successor (*Wasi)* and the *Imam* (the spiritual and temporal leader) has to be a *Masoom*
*(*immaculate and infallible) individual. Such Imams are the Chosen of Allah.

Saad bin Abdallah Qummi reports that once he had a discussion with a hardcore imposter. The man said, " Pity on you *Rawafiz* (dissenters) that you speak ill of the Prophet (a.s.)'s companions and blame them that they had no affection for him. To the contrary, Abu Bakr, because of his eminence being one of the earliest converts to Islam, was better than all other companions of the Prophet (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) used to hold him so close to his heart that on the eve of the Migration (*Hegira)* took Abu Bakr along in the cave for hiding to save him from the sword of the enemy and later on become his successor and Caliph. Ali (a.s.) was left to sleep in the Prophet (a.s.)'s bed that even if he was assassinated, it wouldn't have made any big difference in the matter of succession. Abu Bakr was the first to adopt Islam. Tell me, was his conversion voluntary or under any duress?"

Saad thought for a while, " If I accepted that the conversion was voluntary, then the person would say that there wouldn't be any question of *nifaq* (hypocrisy) in the conduct of Abu Bakr. And if I said that the conversion of Abu Bakr was under duress, then it would be a wrong statement that Islam had not become such a big force at that time that one could even imagine any use of coercion. I was totally confused and sought some time from him to be able to answer his question. Along with some more queries I went to Sammara to meet Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.). Along with me came Ahmed bin Ishaq, the Representative *(Vakil)* of the Imam (a.s.) who carried with him 160 sachets of Dinarts and Dirhams as a presentation to the Imam from the Shias of our place.. . .

We both went to the presence of the Imam (a.s.) and respectfully greeted him. . The Imam (a.s.) reciprocated our greetings and asked us to be seated. The place was aglow with the radiance of the face of the Imam (a.s.). On the lap of the Imam (a.s.) sat a pretty child whose look would put to shame a hundred moons! In the hands of the child there was a pomegranate made of gold, with which he was playing.

Ahmed brought out all the sachets from his bag and put in front of the Imam (a.s.). The Imam (a.s.) put all that money in front of the child and said, 'Your Shias have sent you all this as a gift. Count it.' The child said, ' Does the Imam (a.s.) permit me to touch the tainted and dirty money with my pure hands!' The Imam (a.s.) told to Ahmed, ' Open one of the sachets and keep the money in front of your Imam (a.s.) in waiting.' The child looked at the money once and said, ' This is so much money and is from such and such a person from Qom. Out of the money so much is legitimate (*Halal)* and the rest is illegitimate (*Haram)* Out of the 62 gold sovereigns there are two with faded markings, they are illegitimate..' Ahmed counted the coins and found them to be exactly 62 in number. . He was able to identify the two coins with faded markings. The Imam (a.s.) looked at his son and said,
' O son ! You are absolutely right!' Then Ahmed opened the other sachets, one after the other and the child correctly told about the number of coins in each and also about the

legitimate and illegitimate money in each of them. Then the Imam (a.s.) said, ‘ Collect the illegitimate coins and give them back to their owners.’

Then the Imam said, “ O Ahmed! Where is the piece of cloth that was sent by a certain person for me?”

Ahmed said, “ I have kept that cloth with my luggage. I shall immediately fetch it for you.” When Ahmed went out to fetch the cloth, the Imam (a.s.) turned his attention towards me and said, “ What do you want to say?” I said, “ I have certain questions for which I seek your guidance.” The Imam (a.s.) said, “ You may refer yout questions to this son of mine.”

I said respectfully, “ O Master! The son of My Master! We have heard the Prophet (a.s.) had given the right of divorcing his wives to Hazrat Ali (a.s.). Therefore, at the Battle of Jamal, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) sent a message to Hazrat Ayesha, that she had become the cause of shedding the blood of Muslims. If she didn’t refrain from proceeding further with the conflict, he would be constrained to divorce her from being the wife of the Prophet (a.s.). What sort of divorce was this, that was to become effective even after the demise of the Prophet (a.s.)?”

The Imam (a.s.)’s son replied, “ Allah has given the respected title of *Umm al Momineen* (the mother of the Believers) to the Prophet (a.s.)’s wives. The Prophet (a.s.) had said to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) that if, after his demise, his wives behaved disobediently towards the Commandments of Allah, and confront you for battle, then you have the right to divorce them. This would mean that such wives would be deprived of the title of *Umm al Momineen.”*

I said, “ O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! Tell me about the tradition that Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) was ordered by Allah to remove his footwear. Some scholars say that the footwear was made out of the skin of a cadaver and therefore it was unclean (*najis)* and unfit for wearing to the Holy Place.”

He replied, “ This is wrong. Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) was a Prophet (a.s.) and there is no question of his not knowing whether a thing was *najis* or not. Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) used the same footwear while offering his prayers.”

I said, “ Then what is the meaning of Allah asking Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) to remove his *naalain* (the footwear)?”

He replied, “ When Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) reached the place where one should not have the thought of anyone else in his mind than Allah, Moosa (a.s.) was thinking of his wife. Therefore Allah told him, ‘ O Moosa (a.s.)! This is the Place of Nearness! One should not have the thoughts of love of anyone other than Allah at this Place! Therefor abdicate the love of the *Kafsh e Pa* (the footwear) from your mind. (It is a general practice in the East to allegorically refer to wives as *Kafsh e Pa*-Therefore if someone dreams of the theft of

his footwear, the interpretation of the dream would be that he might be separated from his spouse.

Saad asked, " O son opf the Prophet (a.s.)! What is meant by the expression *Kaa-Haa-Yaa-Ain-Suad* in the Holy Quran?"

He replied, " These are ( ) Hidden Message (*Akhbare Ghaibat) from Allah. Their interpretation was first given to Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) and then to our Prophet (a.s.).*

Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) had prayed to Allah to be taught the names of the *Aal e Aba* that he would recite them to ward off evil. Gibrael came and taught to Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) the names of the Five Infallible Persons of the Prophet (a.s.)'s Family. Whenever Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) uttered the names of Mohammed, Ali, Fatima and Hassan, he used to feel delighted. But whenever he uttered Hussain (a.s.)'s name, he would cry. Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) asked Allah why he felt like crying whenever he took the name of Hussain (a.s.)? Allah narrated about the Tragedy of Karbala and explained to him about the occurrence of the acronym
Kaa-Haa-Yaa-Ain-Suad in the Holy Quran:.
Kaa stands for ***Karbala,*** where the small entourage of Imam Hussain (a.s.) consisting of 72 persons was martyred,
Haa *stands for* ***Hussain (a.s.),*** who was the Chief of the Martyrs of Karbala,
Yaa **for** ***Yazid,*** the perpetrator of the Tragedy of Karbala,
Ain **for** ***Atash*** **or** ***Thirst*****,** the thirst of the children, men and women in Hussain (a.s.)'s camp who were denied access to water for three full days when the river Euphrates flowed nearby, **and**
Suad **for** ***Sabr,*** **or,** patience and forbearance facing the cruelty of Yazid's men in Karbala, during the battle and, by the surviving members of the family, on the way to Syria and in the court of Yazid."

When Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) came to know about the Tragedy, he didn't leave the Mosque for three days. He cried, wailed and repeatedly said, " O Allah! You will put your Beloved Person to such an extreme test. How will Your Habib, the Prophet Mohammed (a.s.) feel about this episode? How will Ali (a.s.), Your Prophet's Vicegerent bear the great loss? What will be the condition of Hussain (a.s.)'s mother, Fatima Zehra (a.s.)? How will Hasan (a.s.) bear the irreparable loss?

O Creator! For the sake of the Noble *Panjatan* (the five Immaculate Persons of the Prophet (a.s)'s family give me one son, equal in looks and qualities to Hussain (a.s.), fill my heart with his love, and put him to as severe a test as you would put Hussain (a.s)! Make me a witness to this tragedy that I become as sorrowful as your Habib, Mohammed (a.s.)!"

Allah answered Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.)'s prayers and gave him Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) as his son. Hazrat Yahya (a.s) was a premature born, delivered in the sixth month of conception, as was Imam Hussain (a.s.), and like Imam Hussain (a.s.) he too was martyred in similar tragic circumstances."

Then I asked, “ O! Son of the Prophet (a.s.)! How is it that the people cannot select their own Imam?”

He replied,” The people would select an Imam who would either turn out to be the reformer of the society or can also turn out to be the enemy of the society and the people.”

I rejoined, “ Definitely, people would choose an Imam who would be a well-wisher and reformer of the people!”

The Imam said, “ Is is not a possibility that the people unanimously select a person to be their Imam expecting him to be righteous, just and capable of reforming the society. But in practice he might prove himself unworthy of the trust placed in him, proves himself an enemy of the people!”

This is why, an Imam can be Decreed only by One who is Infallible in His actions and choice. And that Selector or Ordainer of the Imamate is none other that Allah. He knows the feelings of the hearts and knows the hidden things.”

Then the Imam (a.s.) asked, “ Could Hazrat Moosa (a.s.), one of the Prophets of Allah, have made an error in selecting his Succesor and Imam?”

I nodded in disagreement.

Then the Imam (a.s.) said, “ O Saad! Your opponent has also said that since the Prophet (a.s.) knew that Abu Bakr would succeed him as the Caliph, he took him along on his journey of *Hegira,* lest he got killed staying back in *Mecca* and the matter of the succession getting jeopardized.

Why didn’t you reply to the person this way.. The Prophet (a.s.) had said,’ The Caliphate after me shall be for thirty years’. According to you people the thirty years’ period saw the terms of the first four caliphs. Then, if the Prophet didn’t want to put the Caliphate in jeopardy, he should have taken all the four along with him to the cave and not only one. Do you people think that the prophet (a.s.) had no concern for the safety of the other three prospective caliphs?”

I asked the Imam (a.s.), ” Another question my opponent asked was whether the acceptance of the Faith of Islam by Abu Bakr and Omer was voluntary or was under some sort of duress?”

The Imam (a.s.) said, “ Why didn’t you reply to your opponent that the acceptance of Islam by the two persons was neither voluntary nor under duress, but it was motivated by sheer avarice. These persons were in close league with the Jews and infidels and had heard from them of the predictions in the Torah of the coming of Mohammed (a.s.) as the Prophet and that his reign would be farther and wider than the kingdom of *Bakht Nasr.*

These two persons, therefore, adopted Islam that perhaps the State would, at some future time, come in their hands. But in their hearts, they continued with their original beliefs. Therefore, whenever they felt that their plans were failing, they gave overt and covert indication of their true color. When the Prophet (a.s.) was surrounded by the enemies during the battle of Ohud they thought everything was lost, and flew like the *munafiqeen* (the hypocrites) to the top of the hillock to save their own lives. There is also the incidence when these people hung empty leather oil containers near the Prophet's house with the purpose of scaring his camel to run wild and drop him down. But Allah forewarned the Prophet (a.s.) of this foul scheme and saved him from harm.

Similarly, during the temporal Caliphate of Hazrat Ali (a.s.), Talha and Zubair professed allegiance to him only with the craving to be nominated governors to important provinces of the realm. But when they failed in this attempt, they terminated the allegiance and prepared for battle with Hazrat Ali (a.s.)..

Saad says that when the son of Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.) completed his talk, the Imam (a.s.) left to offer prayers along with his son. Saad came out of the house and found Ahmed bin Ishaq very disturbed and crying. When asked the reason, he said, " The piece of cloth that I had brought for the Imam (a.s.) is not there in my luggage!" Saad told him, " What is the need for crying? Go to the Imam (a.s.) and express your regrets that the cloth was lost or misplaced."

Ahmed went to the presence of the Imam (a.s.) and immediately returned with a smiling face. Saad asked him about the sudden change of his mood. He said," When I reached the presence of the Imam (a.s.), I found the same piece of cloth under his feet, in the act of offering his prayer!" They stayed at Sammara for a few more days. Ahmed took two elderly persons from Qom for an audition with the Imam (a.s.) and said, " A thousand salutations to you and your noble ancestors! Now I seek your permission to leave, although I do it with a heavy heart! I pray to Allah that I get another opportunity to meet you soon.

The Imam (a.s.) said, " Ahmed! Don't pray for the fulfillment of this wish! This is your last journey in this world. After this, you will depart for the Other World."

When Ahmed heard this, he swooned with shock. When he regained senses, he told to the Imam (a.s.), " O Imam (a.s)! Give me something of your raimeent that I use it in place of the shroud for my burial!"

The Imam (a.s.) took out 13 Dirhams from under the carpet and gave to Ahmed and said, " Use this money for personal expenses. Your coffin will reach you in time!"

Saad says that on their return journey they halted at the stage of Halwan. At nightfall Ahmed asked them to leave him alone. They all went to every individual quarter to sleep. When they went to Ahmed's room early next morning, Kafur, the servant of Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.) was emerging out of the room. He said," May Allah help you bear

the loss with forbearance! With the orders of the Imam (a.s.) I have given the last bath and the shroud to Ahmed. You may now arrange for his burial."

Ibne Babawiyah narrates from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that as many times as the Prophet (a.s.) went for the *Meraj,* the most important order that he received from Allah was about the *Imamat,* Vicegerency, of Hazrat Ali (a.s.). When the time for his death drew nigh, Jibrael brought a missive from Allah on which was recorded the duties of the Prophet (a.s.) and his Vicegerents.

Hazrat Jibrael, after conveying the Greetings from Allah, asked the Prophet (a.s.) whether the instructions being conveyed are acceptable to him. The Prophet asked all the visitors to leave his presence and called Hazrat Ali (a.s.) near to him. He then read the instructions given on the missive from Allah and told to Jibrael, " The Master's instructions are acceptable to his servant. Whatever hardships come in the way of fulfillment of these orders, we; myself and my *Ahl al Bayt*, shall bear with equanimity as our duty."

Hazrat Jibrael then departed. The Prophet (a.s) called his daughter, Fatima (a.s.), and her sons, Hassan (a.s.) and Hussain (a.s.). He read to them Allah's instructions. Then he asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.), " O Abu Turab! Will you bear the hardships in store for you? You shall have to be patient when the enemies inflict excesses on you. When they deprive you of your rights, you will have to keep your calm. O Ali (a.s.)! When your beard will get smeared with blood, you should not utter a word of protest." Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! When all these things are acceptable to you, then I am only your slave and servant! Insha Allah! You will find me patient and forbearing." Then the Prophet (a.s.) turned to his daughter, Fatima (a.s.), and said, " O Fatima! Will you bear all the hardships in store for you with patience? Your belongings will be grabbed, the *Door of Imamat* will be demolished, Mohsin will be martyred. You shall be the witness to the hardships inflicted by his enemies on Ali (a.s.)." The obedient and loving daughter of the Prophet (a.s.) said, " O father! When you are willing to bear all the hardships, then your daughter would bow her head to Allah's wishes. .But, tell me, what have you read in the missive about my son Hussain (a.s.). What is in store for him? Will he receive 1950 blows on his body after three days of hunger and thirst in the view of his family and children, will he witness his friends and sons martyred before him, and, even the six months old baby, Asghar, becoming victim of the venomous arrow. Will all this happen in your presence?" The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " No! My daughter! This will happen after me!" She asked, " Will Ab al Hassan, Ali (a.s.), be a witness?" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " No!" She asked, " Shall I be there?' He replied, " No! You too will not be there." When Fatima Zehra (a.s.) heard this, she swooned and fell unconscious. The Prophet (a.s.) tried to console his daughter, " Won't you bow down your head to the wish of Allah!"

Hazrat Fatima (a.s.) revived and said, " O Baba! How could Fatima go against the wishes of the Creator, Allah! But Baba! I have nourished my child through hard work at the grinding stone. Can you not pray to Allah to spare Hussain (a.s.) of the extreme Sacrifice? I am afraid, my delicate child might not bear the insurmountable hardships!"

The Prophet (a.s.) said, “ My Daughter! What can I say to Allah! Even if you lift your hands towards the Heaven and curse the cruel people, then no living creature will remain on the face of the earth. But your son, through this supreme sacrifice, will be the saviour of the True Faith, and shall achieve a highly elevated position. O my daughter! Your two sons, Hassan and Hussain (a.s.), will be the chiefs of the youth of the Heaven, you will be the lady of the Heaven and Ali (a.s) will be keeper of the Cistern of Kauthar, and your father will be the master of the Heaven and the Intercessor on the Day of Judgement!”

Fatima Zehra (a.s.) replied, “ O Baba! If the Faith needs this supreme sacrifice, I accept it. But you must get the consent of Hussain (a.s.) too.” The Prophet (a.s.) then called Hazrat Hussain (a.s.) near him and said, “ O my son Hussain (a.s.)! Are you ready to offer the extreme sacrifice that has been ordered by Allah for you? Are you willing to face this difficult test? This will be in the best interests of the True Faith of Islam!”

Hussain (a.s.) smiled and said, “ O Grand-Father! Don’t ask me. When on the sands of Karbala, the weapon of the assassin will be on my throat, there shall be the words of thanks for Allah on my tongue. You will yourself hear about it and witness the forbearance of Hussain!”

The Prophet (a.s.) departed from this world, The Missive remained with Hazrat Ali (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.)’s daughter bore the tribulations caused by her enemies with equanimity and passed away within three months of the demise of her father. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) faced all the troubles and hardships till Ibne Muljim attacked him with a poisoned sword while he was prostrating in prayer. .At that moment Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ By the Lord of Kaaba ! I have succeeded! I have fulfilled my promise! I was, till now, the conqueror of Khaiber, now I am the Cupbearer of the Cistern of Kauthar! The Missive that I have will pass from hand to hand of the Imams (a.s.) till it reaches the Last of the Imams! Every Imam will fulfil his duties exactly according to the norms laid forth in the Missive. But the Last of The Imams (a.s.), who will be endowed with long life, will have the opportunity to reform the people of the Faith who have gone astray. Finding the people disobeying the norms, then the *Hujjat* (object) of calling the people to reform would be over and the time for Allah sending retribution for the hardships inflicted on the Prophet and the Imams (a.s.) would be ripe. All this will happen during the period of *Raj-at* (the Resurrection). Every Shia has to have Faith in the Institution of *Raj-at.* It has also to be borne in mind that the trials and tribulations of the Imams (a.s.) were not to test their strong Faith, Allah, Who has the Knowledge of All Hidden Things is fully aware of the Faith of these Immaculate Imams. The trials were with the sole purpose to prove to the people that if Hussain (a.s.) was chosen to be the Leader of the Youth of Heaven, it was because of his supreme sacrifice in the cause of the Faith.

In fact awarding the honor of the leadership of the Youth of *Jannat* is the Exclusive Prerogative of Allah and the *Hasanain (a.s.)* were the chosen ones for that distinction.

It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that Jibrael came to the Prophet (a.s.) and gave him a Missive from Allah that had described the Duties of the Prophet (a.s.) and all his successors. The Prophet (a.s.) opened the missive, read it and said to Jibrael that he

totally agreed to the orders of his Lord, the Creator. Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) opened the portion of the Missive meant for him, read it, acted on it and departed after bearing all the tribulations in store for him. Hazrat Fatima (a.s.) too fulfilled her obligations according to the Missive. Then followed Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain (a.s.) who measured up to the norms prescribed in the Missive. The Missive shall pass through the hands of all the Imams (a.s.) till it comes in the possession of the Twelfth, the Last Imam (a.s.). He will take revenge for the hardships inflicted by their enemies on the *Ahl al Bayt..*

THE SECOND RAY OF LIGHT
THE CHASTITY OF THE IMAMS

The True Faith of Jafariah professes that the Imam (a.s.), from his childhood to the death is possessor of Immaculate Chastity and free of all minor and major sins. But those groups who say that chastity is not a necessary qualifying characteristic to be sought in an Imam, is because of the fact that candidates they put forth for the august position were for years in the darkness of infidelity prior to accepting Islam. Any person with right thinking knows that entrusting matters of Religious Reforms to a person with a sinful past cannot be effective when compared to the leadership of a True and Chaste Imam. In fact, the edicts of a person of the former type might create a high degree of sedition in the society. When such a person is deposed from his office, on being discovered that he had been issuing harmful orders, might create dissension and schisms in the community. Either way, such leaders are a danger to the social fabric. The example of Yazid is a case in point that the temporal caliphate falling in his hands became the cause of great transgression and debauchery not only in him and his retainers, but it spread as a disease to the society. Therefore, Allah has Ordered that the Chosen in Authority (*The Aulu al Amr)* are the Immaculate Innocents (*The masoomeen*) whose obedience is mandatory for the believers.

Therefore, Allama Fakruddin Raazi has written in his Commentary of the Quran that *Aulu al Amr* connotes only the *Masoom* and none else, and there is an injunction that they must be implicitly obeyed. To the contrary, obeying the orders of a person who approves of taboo (*Haram)* acts is forbidden. Allah will not order people obeying a person who is a sinner himself, and is advising others against sinning.

Allah, addressing Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.), in the Holy Quran, clarifies the point thus:

" La yanalo ahdiazzalemeen"
" My Authority shall not reach the transgressors."

The person who remained an infidel even for a day, is in the ranks of the transgressors (*Zalemeen).* Therefore it is to the advantage of the people to be with the *Sadeqeen (*the veracious). And verily Sadeq are the Imams (a.s.)!

THE THIRD RAY OF LIGHT
THE VERSE OF PURITY
(THE AYAT E TATHEER)

It has been recorded at regular intervals that the Verse of Purity has been revealed in the praise of the *Ahl al Bayt* who are recognized as the *Aaale Aba* and according to some traditions all the Imams (a.s.) are the subject of this Verse.

The author of *Kashaf,* although a very biased person, records in detail the event of *Mubahila*. When the Prophet (a.s.) invited the Christians of *Najran* for *Mubahila* (mutual imprecation to prove one's point), the Christians requested for some time that they wanted to discuss the matter with their Bishop. The Bishop said that Mohammed (a.s.) was truly the Prophet and he has presented the truth in front of you. Whosoever takes recourse to an imprecation with a Prophet gets destroyed. If you take any such step, it will be calamitous for your community. If you wish to safeguard your community then go and seek for a truce.

On the morning of the appointed day the Prophet (a.s.) came out for the purpose of *Mubahila* with Imam Hussain (a.s) in his arms, Imam Hasan (a.s.) holding the finger of his right hand and behind him followed Fatima and Ali (a.s.). Thus arrived the small group into the selected ground and the Prophet (a.s.) told to the four Immaculates with him that the moment he uttered the prayer against the opponents, all the four of them should say," Aameen!" On the other side, when the Bishop of Najran saw this scene, he told to his people," O group of Christians! I see in front of me such faces that if they pray, the mountain will move from its place! Don't enter into an imprecation with them, otherwise there will not remain a single Christian on the Earth!"

Therefore, all those persons came to the presence of the Prophet (a.s.) and told him that they decided not to have an imprecation with them.
The Prophet (a.s.) then said," if you don't wish to have an imprecation as per our previous agreement, then you accept Islam."
The Christians refused to accept this suggestion.
Then the Prophet (a.s.) said," In this event, prepare for a battle!"
They said," we do not have the strength to battle with you and we want a truce."
Therefore the truce was made on the condition that every year two thousand *Hillas* were to be given in the month of *Safr* and one thousand in the month of *Rajab*, thirty high quality chains of arm to also be given every year. After the truce the Prophet (a.s.) told them that if the Christians had not entered into this agreement and opted for the imprecation, no single person of the group would have lived. Even the birds on the trees

of the forest would have perished and the entire community of Christians would have perished within the period of one year.

The author of the book *Kashaaf* quotes from Hazrat Ayesha that the Prophet (a.s.) arrived from outside one day wearing a shawl made of black hair. Then came Hassan, Hussain, Ali and Fatima (a.s.). He took all of them under his shawl..Then the Prophet (a.s.) recited the following verse from the Quran:

" *Innama yureed Allaho leyuzheba unkum arrijsa ahlalbaithe wa yutahhira kum tatheera."*
"Allah wishes, O Ahl al Bayt, to keep all sin (*rijs)* away from you, and keep you Pure as Pure could be."

Then the author of *Kashaaf* asks a question why the Prophet (a.s.) took along with him the same persons on the day of *Mubahila*? Usually, people don't involve their near and dear on such risky ventures where there is possibility of loss of lives. But the Prophet (a.s.) was confident of the Truth of his Stand and he knew that, as mentioned in the Verse of Purity, they were all virtuous persons.

Malik, one of the Imams of Ahl e Sunnat writes in his book, *Mauta* :

" After the Revelation of the Verse of Purity, for a period of about six months, the Prophet (a.s.) used to stop at the door of Fatima (a.s.)'s house every morning on his way to the Mosque for the *Fajr* prayer and say in a loud voice" *As Salath ya Ahlebaith ! Innama yureed Allaho leyuzheba ankum arrijsa ahlalbaithe wa yutahhira kum tathira!"*

Saheeh *Abi Dawood* too records the event the same way. Anas, Saheeh Bukhari (Vol 4), Saheeh Muslim etc have narrated from Hazrat Ayesha the same tradition. In the Saheeh Muslim, Volume 4, in the Chapter on the Qualities of Ameer al Momineen, it is quoted from Saad bin Abi Wiqas that when the Verse of Imprecation (*Mubahila)* was revealed, the Prophet (a.s.) called Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hussain (a.s.) and asked them to enter under his shawl with him and told to Allah,"These are my Ahl al Bayt!" Abu Dawood narrates from Umme Salema that the Verse of Purity was revealed in her house. She said that at that time Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hussain (a.s.) were with the Prophet (a.s.) under his shawl. She was herself seated near the door when the Prophet (a.s.) prayed to Allah, " O Allah! These are my Ahl al Bayt.. Keep all sin (*Rijs)* away from them". Umme Salema went forward and told to the Prophet (a.s.), " Am I not one of your Ahl al Bayt?" The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " No! You are my spouse. You r Hereafter will be good!".

Similar statements are recorded in several books of the Ahle Sunnat. Here *Rijs* does not on ly mean sin, but implies all sorts of weaknesses and ills. It is Allah's Commitment that He will Keep the Ahl al Bayt in Immaculate Purity! Therefore, these Holy Individuals wouldn't even utter a falsehood. It is an established fact of the history that every Imam (a.s.) had publicly claimed that he was the Imam of the time appointed by Allah. This proves their claim was right and true!

THE FOURTH RAY OF LIGHT
THE EXCELLENCE OF THE AHL AL BAYT

Ibne Babawiyah quotes through reliable source that Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said that the Prophet (a.s.) has observed,“ The love for me and my Ahl al Bayt will give succor to the believers on seven occasion, that are:

1. At the time of death
2. In the Grave.
3. At the time of *Mabas.*
4. When the *Nama-e-Aamal* (The Inventory of Deeds is compiled)
5. At the time of Audit of Deeds (*Ba waqt e Hisab)*
6. At the time of balancing of deeds *(Ba Waqt e Meezan)*
7. While on the Bridge of *Sirat.”*

Harith Hamadani says that once he went to the presence of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) who asked him,

“ O Harith! What is the purpose of your coming here?”

Harith replied, “ I have been drawn here by my desire to meet you!”

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ O Harith! Do you hold me as a friend?”

Harith said, “ Without any doubt!”

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) then said, “ Harith! When you will be in the throes of death, you will find me near yourself! I would be giving to you the waters of the Cistern of Kauthur at that moment. I would be warding away your enemies from you. You will be pleased to see me cross the Bridge of *Siraat* with the *Lawa e Hamd* in my hand! Insha Allah!!”

- Abu Hamza Shamali has narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that the Prophet told to Hazrat Ali (a.s.), “ O Ali! Whosever has your love in his heart, while he traversed the Bridge of Siraat, if one of his feet faltered, his other foot would stabilize his progress till the moment Allah gave him entrance to the Heaven.”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, “ The love of the Ahl al Bayt wards off sins as the winds blow away the leaves.”

- Imam Reza (a.s.) said, " The Prophet (a.s.) has said that he would intercede on behalf of four type of person on the Day of Reckoning: 1. Those who had whole-heartedly helped my Ahl al Bayt. 2. Those who had helped them in the times of need. 3. Those who had considered the Ahl al Bayt as their friends from the depths of their hearts. 4. Those who made sincere efforts to keep my Ahl al Bayt safe from the harm's way." Imam Reza (a.s.) also said that the Prophet (a.s.) has said, " One who befriended my Ahl al Bayt, Allah will befriend him on the Day of Judgement, and he will not have any fear of that Day."
- In the Book *Basair ad Darajat* it is mentioned that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrated that the Prophet told to Hazrat Ali (a.s.), " O Ali! I have seen every child and adult of my believers in the realm of spirits, I have seen you and your *Shias* and have prayed for their Deliverance!"

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked the Prophet (a.s.), " O Prophet of Allah! Please tell me about the qualities of the Shias."

- The Prophet (a.s.) replied," O Ali! When you and your Shias are raised from the graves, their faces will shine like the full moon. Sorrow and sadness will not come near you. Other people will be sad, but your group will will be tranquil and happy under the shadow of the Firmament (*The Arsh).* The others will be occupied in giving account of their deeds and you, and your Shias, will be enjoying the Bounties of the Heaven."
- Imam Reza (a.s.) said that the Prophet (a.s.) has said that, " whoever is a friend of Ali (a.s.), will be at a place where the Prophets will be accommodated on the Day of Judgement. Ali's enemies will find themselves treated like the Jews on the Day of Reckoning."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said that there are seventy types of angels in the sky. Each type of the angels is in numbers higher than the entire human population in the world. All these angels believe and profess our *Wilayat* (Saint hood).
- Sheik Toosi narrates from Maitham e Tammar that one night he was with Hazrat Ali (a.s.) when the Imam told him, " Allah showers his Blessings every morning on all the persons in the world who have our love in their hearts. Allah curses those persons who have enmity for us in their hearts. When I awake in the mornings, I feel happy that our friends are receiving Allah's Blessings! Pity on our enemies that with dawn every day they draw nearer to Hell! Our enmity and friendship cannot assemble in one heart. One who professes our friendship, he should keep it clean as the gold is kept free of impurities."
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) told told to Abi Abd Allah Jadli," I shall show you that because of the good deeds you will not have any fears on the Day of Judgement. For the sins committed Allah will throw the person in the hell. When Abi Abdallah asked about the good and bad deeds, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said that the good deeds are your love for us and the sins are the enmity that people have for us.
- Salman narrates that one day he went to the Prophet (a.s.) when Hazrat Ali (a.s.) too arrived. The Prophet (a.s.) had a pebble in his hand. He put the pebble in Hazrat Ali

(a.s.)'s hand. The pebble uttered the twin witness of *la ilaha ill Allah, Mohammadur Rasool Allah.* Then the pebble also uttered its faith in the *wilayath* of Hazrat Ali (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) then said that whosoever witnessed that Allah is one, Mohammed (a.s.) is His Prophet and Ali (a.s), the *Wali* and Vicegerent can have no fear of going to the Hell.

- Imam Raza (a.s.) has narrated from his ancestors that they had heard from the Prophet (a.s.), who in turn had received the information from Jibrael and Mikael that Allah has said," the *Wilayath* of Ali (a.s.) is like a fort where every person is safe from My Retribution."
- Books of all the schools mentioned that the Prophet (a.s.) has said," If all the people were united on the matter of the *Wilayath* of Ali (a.s.), Allah would not have created the Hell.
- Anas narrates from the Prophet (a.s.)," Allah will send a group of people who's faces will radiate light, who will be sitting on shining chairs and will be dressed in bright raiment. They will be seated under the shade of the firmament. They will be sitting in the company of the Prophets (a.s.) although they will not be the Prophets themselves, they will accompany the martyrs although they may themselves not be martyred people." Then the Prophet (a.s.) also said," (keeping his hand on the head of Hazrat Ali (a.s) that these people will be his *Shias* (friends)."
- Sheik Toosi narrates from Imam Raza (a.s.) that the Prophet (a.s.) told to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) that on the Day of Judgement, after completion of the account of good deeds and sins of the people, Allah would give to him the Keys to the Heaven and the Hell. Then the Prophet (a.s.) would in turn hand over the Keys to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and tell him," O goblet-bearer of the Cistern of Kauther! Whomsoever you wish to send to the Heaven or to the Hell, you may do that!"
- Ibne Babawiyah quotes from reliable source of having heard from the Imams (a.s.) that on the Day of Judgement a pulpit will be arranged. Hazrat Ali (a.s.), with orders of Allah will sit on this pulpit. An Angel will stand on his right and another on the left. The Angel on the right will announce that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) is sitting on the pulpit and he will send the deserving people to the heaven. The Angel on the left too would announce that the persons deserving of punishment will be sent by Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to the Hell.
- Abdallah bin Umar reports that the Prophet (a.s.) told to Hazrat Ali (a.s.)," When the Day of Judgement comes, O Ali! You will be astride a horse made of light. On your head there will be a shining crown. The light of this crown will make the eyes blink. At that time an announcement will be heralded by Allah,' O the friend of My friend (Mohammed Mustafa)! Where are you?' O Ali! You will say that you are at His service! Then Allah will say,' O Ali! It is you who is the arbiter who will decide as to who should go to the Heaven and who should go to the Hell.'
- Imam Raza (a.s.) narrates that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that one day he was sitting with the Prophet (a.s.) near the Kaaba when one old man with a bent body having a staff in his hand, wearing a red cap on his head and a woolen overall came near the Prophet (a.s.) and said," O the Prophet of Allah! Kindly pray that Allah pardons me!" the Prophet (a.s.) replied,

- ” Your expectation is of no avail. Your wish to get a pardon cannot be fulfilled.” When the person was departing in disappointment, the Prophet (a.s) asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.),” have you recognized this old person?” Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied,” I have not been able to place him.” The Prophet (a.s.) said,” it was the accursed Satan. Hearing this he rushed towards the Satan, caught hold of his neck and threw him to the ground. He shouted,” O Abul Hassan! Allah has given me respite till the Dooms Day! Please don’t kill me.
- Salman narrates that once the Satan came across some people who were talking ill of Hazrat Ali (a.s.). He stood near them. The people asked him who he was and he replied that he was *Abu Marra.* Those persons asked him if he overheard what they were talking about. He said,” May evil overtake you! You talk ill of your own master Ali (a.s.)!” Those persons asked him why he was saying that Ali (a.s.) was their master. The Satan said,
- ” According to the announcement of your Prophet Ali (a.s.) is the master of all those of whom the Prophet (a.s.) is the master and also that Ali (a.s.)’s friendship is Allah’s friendship and enmity with Ali (a.s.) is enmity with Allah.” Those persons asked him,” Are you a Shia of Ali (a.s.)?” the Satan said,” No. However I am a friend of Ali (a.s.) and I am also present in the progeny of his enemies.” Those people asked him,” O Abu Marra! Can you recount some of Ali (a.s.)’s excellence. The Satan replied,” O group of misguided persons! You have become heretics! I was busy in prayer with some people on the land for twelve thousand years when those persons were destroyed by Allah. I was left all alone. I protested to Allah about my loneliness. Allah, in His Kindness, raised me to the Heaven where, along with the Angels I was busy in prayers for another twelve thousand years. One day when I was busy praying to Allah, I noticed a ray of light pass by. The Angels fell down in prostration and said that this light was that of some great Prophet (a.s.). A proclamation came from Allah,” O My Angels! The light you have seen is that of my *Wali*, Ali ibne Abu Talib (a.s.).”

Abu Hurara narrates that a person came to the Prophet (a.s.) and said that a poor person went to China. From China he came back with so much riches that the people in the town started envying him. The Prophet (a.s.) said,” can this transitory world cause people to envy others. The person who is sitting here has acquired the riches about which even the Angels in the firmament will be envious.

We noticed that one Ansari arrived near the Prophet (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) said,” This man has amassed great amount of wealth and has deposited a part of his treasure in the high seat of *Arsh*. The man shall receive so much reward for this that if it is distributed amongst all the inmates of the Heaven and the Earth, all their sins would be pardoned and entry to the Heaven for them will become mandatory!”

The companions asked the person,” What good deed you have done today that you have qualified for such a high reward?”

The man said,” I stirred out of my house for some important work. On the way I thought that I have delayed myself in the matter and perhaps I may not be able to achieve my end. Suddenly I had an idea at that time that instead of going for my own task, I try to do some good turn. Therefore I went to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to get a glimpse of his radiant face. I am

aware of the Prophet (a.s.)'s tradition that looking at Hazrat Ali's face is like offering prayer."

The Prophet (a.s.) said," No doubt! By Allah looking at Ali is like offering prayer! You started from home in the search of wealth and went to Ali instead and set your eyes on his Holy face with the knowledge and intention that it was like offering prayer. Since your act was with purity of heart you have earned Allah's reward. If the entire world becomes of gold and all of it is distributed in charity, it will not be equivalent to the reward for setting eyes on the face of Ali!"

THE FIFTH RAY OF LIGHT
PRAYER AND THE LOVE OF AHL AL BAYT

The correctness of prayer depends on the Faith in the Twelve Imams (a.s.). Any prayer without this belief is futile. In fact any amount of prayer without the love for the Ahl al Bayt of the Prophet has negative effects.

Ibne Babawiyah narrates from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that when a person goes for accounting of his deeds on the Day of Judgement, he will first have to attest his Faith in the Wilayeth of the Imams (a.s.) before he accounts for his *Salat (*Prayer), *Saum* (fasting), *Zakat (*the tithe) and the *Haj.*If at the time of his death, a person has faith in the *Ahl al Bayt,* his compliance with the *Furoo-e-Deen*, the religious practices mentioned here, will be acceptable to Allah.

The Imam (a.s.) also said that Jibrael came to the Prophet (a.s.) and said, " Allah sends you His Greetings and says that He has created the earth and the sky as also the *Muqaam e Ibrahim* (the Place of Ibrahim). If a human being worships Him sitting near the Place of Ibrahim, at the Door of the Kaaba, throughout his life, or even from the day the

Universe was Created till the Doomsday, with no love for Ali Ibne abi Talib (a.s.) in his heart, will be put in the Hell."

It is also narrated that it was Revealed by Allah to His Prophet (a.s.) even if a person becomes lean like a dried leather water pouch in His Prayer without the love for the Ahl al Bayt, he will not earn an entry to the Heaven.

Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) narrates that the Prophet (a.s.) said that a person who has good deeds in his account equivalent to the good deeds of seventy prophets, and has no love for the Ahl al Bayt, will never be admitted to the Heaven by Allah. The Imam (a.s.) also asked his companions, " Tell me, which place is the most sacred?" The companions said, " The Imam (a.s.) knows the best!" He said that the most sacred place is the *Muqam e Ibrahim.* But if a person, with the longevity equal to that of *Noah,* sits there and prays all his life, and has no belief in our *Wilayeth,* his prayers will be futile."

This tradition is accepted by all the schools of thought that, " One who did not recognize the Imam (a.s.) of his time, he died an infidel." Therefore for every Muslim the knowledge about the Imam is absolutely necessary.

THE SIXTH RAY OF LIGHT
THE QUALITIES OF THE IMAM

Since the commoners depend on the norms of the Faith and the Society, it is essential that the Imam (a.s.) must be fully versed with the Knowledge of the laws and jurisprudence. He should have full knowledge of the *Mohkam* (Firm), the *Mutashabeh* (Ambiguous), the *Mujmi* (Abstract), the *Mufassil* (Detailed), the *Nasiq* (Current) and the *Mansooq* (Void) verses of the Holy Quran. He has to be an erudite scholar of the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (a.s.) and well versed in all branches of knowledge and learning. The Imam (a.s.) has to possess exemplary bravery that he is capable of confronting the enemies of the Faith. The Imam (a.s.) should be superior in learning to all his followers because it is undesirable that the students have knowledge superior to the mentor and the ignorant better informed than the scholar. Allah, therefore, says in the Holy Quran:

" *Whatever you wish to know, ask of the possessors of Knowledge."*. . .

This is the reason why Allah made Adam(a.s.)superior to the Angels in knowledge and asked them to prostrate before him. About knowledge Allah poses a question in the Holy Quran:

“ *Are the learned and the ignorant equal?”*

It is also imperative that the *Imam* has to be the guide, the mentor, superior and perfect in knowledge to show the Right Path to the *mamoom* (the follower). The *Imam* is the Vicegerent of the *Prophet* and his successor. Therefore the task of the *Imam,* as that of the *Prophet,* is to Guide his *Umma* (the Flock). If the Imam is imperfect in Knowledge, then the predicament of the flock can well be imagined!

Imam Reza (a.s.) says that there are certain characteristics by which an Imam is recognized:

- He should be the wisest of his time.
- He should be most pious.
- He should be most suave and forbearing.
- There should be none equal in bravery and generosity to him.
- He must be the most committed to the Prayer of Allah.
- He is born naturally circumcised.
- He is born totally clean.
- He has the faculty to see in his back without turning his eyes backwards.
- His shadow is not cast on the ground.
- At birth, he puts his hands on the ground and recites the Witness: *La ilaha il Allah Mohammadur Rasool Allah.*
- He doesn’t get night-dreams (*Ehtelam)*
- Although his eyes sleep, the eyes of his heart are always awake.
- He gets informed of the future events through his dreams.
- The *angels* converse with him.
- The chain armor of the Prophet would fit him like a glove.
- None would have seen his feces.
- His body would radiate a fragrance better than that of musk.
- People would be willing to lay down their lives for him.
- He will be more affectionate towards the *Momins* than their own parents.
- He will be most generous and kind.
- He always sets examples for his followers.
- Whatever he asks his followers not to do, he himself abstains to do.
- His prayer is so effective that if he wishes, stones would shatter to smithereens in a moment.
- All the arms of the Prophet would be in his possession.
- He will be the carrier of the Twin-Edged Sword, the *Dhual Fiqar.*

- He will possess a document on which the names of his friends and foes are recorded.
- He will be the exponent of *Jafr e Akbar* and *Jafr e Asghar* that have record of all the events past, present and future.
- He will have with him the *Sahifa e Fatima.*
- He will possess *Ilm e Laddunni,* that is, he will not need a mentor or tutor to teach him.

Kulaini narrates that Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has enumerated the characteristics of the *Imam*:

1. The Imam is pure from birth and is born naturally circumcised.
2. Immediately after birth, the Imam would put both his hands on the ground and loudly utter the Witness that there is no god, but Allah, and Mohammed (a.s.) is his Prophet.
3. The Imam will not have wet dreams.
4. The eyes-of- the-heart of the Imam never go to sleep.
5. The Imam never yawns.
6. The Imam can see things at his back as well as the things in his front without requiring to turn his face backwards.
7. The Prophet's Armor of Chain fits the Imams exactly..
8. The Imams converse with the Angels.

Humairi narrates in his book " *Qarb al Asnad"* that Abu Naseer once went to Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) and asked him, " How to identify an Imam?" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " the first characteristic of an Imam is that he must have been nominated by his father to succeed him as a mark of *Itmam e Hujjat,* or fulfilling his duty. This is the same way as the Prophet (a.s.) had nominated Hazrat Ali (a.s) as his Vicegerent or *Imam.* The other characteristic of an Imam is that he is able to give answer to any question that is asked of him, and has the faculty to give the reply to a question before it is asked...The Imam can answer the question in the language of the questioner."

Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " Be seated that I give you the Proof of my Imamat." At that time a Persian, from Khorasan, came there and asked a question in the Arabic language. The Imam replied him in Persian, the man's mother tongue. The Khorasani said, " O Holy Imam! I had put my question in the Arabic language thinking that you might not know Persian! But you speak better Persian than me!" The Imam (a.s.) told to the man, " If I cannot reply you in your language, then you become superior to me; but then, how could I be your Imam if I don't know your language?" Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " O Abu Mohammed! The language of no person is strange to the Imam. He knows the tongues of the animals, birds and all the living creatures. The Imam can be identified and recognized with these characteristics. If a person claims to be an Imam and doesn't have these manisfestaions, then his not an Imam."

Abu Baseer narrates that he asked Imam Reza (a.s.) about the sign of an Imam. The Imam (a.s.) replied, " The first sign of the Imamate is that the incumbent is the first born of the Imam. He is superior in knowledge, in learning, to all his contemporaries. The Armor of the Prophet (a.s.) to be in his possession and would exactly fit him. He would also

possess the Standard used by the Prophet (a.s). Hazrat Ali (a.s.) had said, ‘ The Prophet had taught to me a thousand chapters of learning, and from every chapter another thousand chapters became manifest to me. ‘ “

The Imam (a.s) further said, “ O Abu Mohammed! I have the *Jameah*” I asked him, “ What is *Jameah?*” The Imam (a.s) replied, “ *Jameah* is a document dictated by the Prophet (a.s.) to Hazrat Ali (a.s). This contains the details of everything that is legitimate (*Halal)* and
taboo (*Haram*) for the believers.” Then the Imam said, “ We have the *Mushaf e Fatima* (the Book of Fatima). This Book is three times more voluminous than the Holy Quran and contains, besides the Quran, all the information about the past and about the times to come.”

It is narrated from Hammad bin Othman that the Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) has said that the *Zanadiqah* (Hypocrite Fire-Worshippers) will appear in one hundred and twenty eight. I have myself read about it in the *Sahifa e Fatima.”*

I asked, “ What is the *Sahifa e Fatima?*”

The Imam (a.s.) said, “ When the Prophet (a.s) departed from this world, Hazrat Fatima (a.s) became very sad and disconsolate. She used to grieve most of the time. To console her, Allah deputed an angel to narrate to her the events to take place in the future. As the angel continued the narration, Hazrat Ali (a.s) took notes. This compilation is called the *Sahifa e Fatima.* This Book does not contain any instructions about *Halal* and *Haram* but contains the description of events in store for the future.

Abi Yahya was told by Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s), “ O AbuYahya! Allah has rewarded us with high status! Every Friday night Allah permits all the Prophets of the past and your current Imam to visit the Firmament When they are in the Firmament, they offer two *Rakat* each of prayer at every station there. They acquire lot of knowledge during the visit. Your Imam too comes back with a fund of newly acquired knowledge.”

Saif Tammar narrates that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) said, “ If I was with Hazrat Moosa and Hazrat Khizr (a.s), they would have accepted that I was better informed than they were. I would have brought to their knowledge certain things they were unaware of. They had knowledge of only the things past, and we know everything of past, present and future! This knowledge has come down to us from our Prophet as an inheritance.” Then the Imam said, “ The Beneficent and Merciful Allah bestows kindness on His creations much more than their own parents. Allah has kept us informed of the events taking place on the earth and the sky.”

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The Imam (a.s.) also said, “ Jibrail came to the Prophet (a.s.) and gave him two pomegranates. The Prophet (a.s.) ate one of them and made two portions of the other. One half of this he ate and gave the other half to Hazrat Ali (a.s) to eat. Then he said, ‘ O Ali! Do you know anything about these pomegranates? One of the fruits, from which you did

not get any portion to eat, contained Prophet-hood. But the other pomegranate, that we shared, contained knowledge.' The narrator asked the Imam (a.s.),' How was Ali (a.s.) a partner in the knowledge of the Prophet?" The Imam (a.s) replied, " Allah has not endowed any knowledge to the Prophet that He didn't transmit to Hazrat Ali! In turn, that knowledge has come to us, the Imams!"

Then the Imam (a.s) added, " When Hazrat Moosa and Hazrat Khizr wanted to go their different ways from the bank of the river, they noticed a bird. The bird put a drop of water towards the east, another towards the west; one skywards and another drop of water on the earth. Then finally, the bird put one drop of water in the river. Both were wondering at this riddle. At this moment one hunter emerged from the river and explained to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) and Hazrat Khizr (a.s.) that the bird wanted to express that in the final Epoch there will be a Prophet (a.s.) who will possess the knowledge of the east, the west, the earth and the sky. The bird put the fifth drop in the river to demonstrate that the knowledge of the Prophet (a.s.) will be free flowing like the waters of the river. This knowledge will be in the possession of the Vicegerent and cousin of the Prophet (a.s.). Telling this, the hunter vanished. "

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " I possess the knowledge of the Book of Allah from cover to cover. The Quran, that contains information about the earth and the sky, of the past and the future, is firmly in our hands. We have the knowledge of everything!"

Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " Allah has taught two *Ism e Azam* (Miraculous Words) to Hazrat Issa (a.s.), which caused the miracles credited to him. Allah taught four *Ism e Azam* to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.), eight to Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s), fifteen to Hazrat Nooh (a.s.) and twentyfive to Hazrat Adam (a.s).. There are 73 *Ism e Azam* in all, and our Prophet (a.s.) has been informed of 72. There is one *Ism e Azam,* about which Allah has not imparted the knowledge to anyone!"

Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) narrates that Allah has 73 *Ism e Azam* out of which only one was known to *Asif bin Barqiah* through which he was able to fetch the *Throne of Bilqis* in the time taken to wink the eyes. We, the *Ahl al Bayt* have the knowledge of 72 *Ism e Azam!* There is one *Ism e Azam* of which, none other than Allah has the knowledge. Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said that the staff of Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) was with Hazrat Adam (a.s.), then it came down to Hazrat Shoeb (a.s.) and then to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.). The staff is now in our possession. It is still fresh and green, as if, it has just been separated from the tree. If talked to, the staff gives replies. This staff will reach the Last Imam (a.s.), from hand to hand. The Last Imam (a.s.) will throw the staff towards his enemies and it would turn into a serpent and swallow them. "

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, " The Tablets of Moosa (a.s.) and his Staff are with us. We are the inheritors of the Prophets (a.s.)."

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says, " When the Last Imam (a.s.) will appear in Mecca, it will be ordered that no person should carry any eatables with him. The Imam (a.s.) will

have one Tablet of Moosa (a.s.) on his camel's back. With the help of this tablet food and other necessary things will become available, whenever required.."

Mufassil narrates that one day Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) asked him, " Do you know! What was the raiment of Hazrat Yusuf (a.s.)?" Mufassil expressed his ignorance about this. The Imam (a.s.) said, " When Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) was thrown into the fire of Nimrod, Allah sent a raiment for him. This raiment was not affected by extremes of heat and cold. Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) gave this raiment to Hazrat Ishaq (a.s.) at the time of his death. Then it came to Hazrat Yaqoob (a.s.) who, in turn, gave it to his son Hazrat Yusuf.(a.s) This was the same raiment, smelling which, Hazrat Yaqub (a.s.) said that he was getting the fragrance of his son Hazrat Yusuf (a.s.) from it. "

Mufassil asked the Imam (a.s.), " Then ! Where did the raiment go?"

The Imam (a.s.) said, " The raiment then went to the deserving, the *Ahl al Baiyt!* It is now with us along with the other Holy Relics viz. The Bier of Bani Israel, the arms and armor of the Prophet (a.s.) etc..The one who possesses these things is the Vicegerent and Successor of the Prophet (a.s.)."

" O Mufassil! The Vicegerent of the Prophet (a.s.) is one who is visited by the angels. These angels offer their prayers standing behind him. The angels will protect the Vicegerent from the evil enemies. . The angels also inform the Vicegerent about the kings who are to die and those who will ascend to the thrones!"

Sadeer Sairfi narrates that Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) ordered him to go out from Medina for some errand. He was still on his way when a man overtook him and gave him a letter that had a fresh seal on it. He opened the letter and found that it was from the Imam a.s.). The letter contained fresh instructions for him. He was wondering how the carrier could reach him so fast that he had already travelled more than fair distance towards his destination. Then he thought, the carrier must be an angel to have reached him with the Imam (a.s.)'s missive so fast!.

On his return he asked the Imam (a.s.), " O my Master! Did you send that letter to me with some angel?" He replied, " No! It was a Jinn who is generally present in our service!"

Abu Hamza Shimali narrates that he was once travelling with Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) half way between Mecca and Medina when he noticed a dog coming in their direction. When it came near them, he saw that it was a bird. Surprised, he asked the Imam (a.s.), " O my Master! What is this?" He replied, " This a Jinn who brings the news of the death of Hisham."

Kulaini narrates from Saad Askaf that he went to the presence of Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.). When he was taking leave, the Imam (a.s.) said, " Wait awhile!" In the meanwhile some tall persons with yellowish faces entered the place of the Imam (a.s.). I asked the Imam (a.s.), " Who these people are?" The Imam (a.s.) said, " These are Jinns, your

brothers In Faith. They have come here to seek clarification about things *Halal* and *Haram*."

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that, one-day, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) was seated on the pulpit of *Masjid e Koofa* when a serpent entered the threshold of the mosque. The people tried to kill it. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) prevented them from doing so. The serpent came near the pulpit, rose and greeted the Imam (a.s.). Hazrat Ali (a.s.) inquired the reason for its coming there. It said, " O Master! I am Omer bin Othman. My father was appointedc the head of the Jinn by you. He is no more. Before his demise he had asked me to come to your presence and take your orders."

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " I advise you to be pious! I order you too to take the place of your father and continue discharging the duties of the chief of the Jinns.'

The narrator asked Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) if Omer bin Othman ever comes to him and is he duty bound to obey him? The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Yes!"

Noman bin Bashir narrates that after a visit to Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) in Medina he was on his way back to Kufa along with Jabir bin Yazid Jaufi and other persons. On the way they noticed a very tall person approaching them from the opposite direction. The person gave a letter to Jabir having a very fresh seal on it. Jabir kissed the letter, put it to his eyes, opened and read it. On reading the letter, Jabir had a very sad expression on his face. After reaching Koofa, I went to Jabir's place one day. I found him running around on the streets, riding on a bamboo stick along with urchins, shouting that Mansoor has become the emir of Koofa. Jabir looked at me, but he didn't greet or talk to me. He recited a few couplets of poetry and continued pranking with the urchins. People expressed their sorrow that Jabir had gone mad.

After a few days Hisham bin Abdul Malik's orders came to the chief of Koofa to execute Jabir and send his head to him.

The chief of Koofa asked the people to identify Jabir for him. The people said, " Jabir is a reputed scholar, narrator of traditions and has performed the Haj several times over. But presently he has lost his mental balance and has gone mad!"

The chief of Kooka said, " Alhamd u Lillah! It is not obligatory for me to execute him now!"
A few days after the event, Mansoor was appointed chief of the city of Koofa and Jabir's prediction was proved true.

The Prophet of Islam(a.s.) has said, " Allah has two types of learning, one is for Himself, that has not been taught to anyone else. The other type of learning is that which has been transferred to the prophets (a.s.) and the angels, that also has come down to us.

Authentic traditions credited to the Imams (a.s.) record that the Torah of Prophet Moosa (a.s.), Bible of the Prophet Eesa (a.s.), the Zuboor of the Prophet Dawood (a.s.), the Book

of Ibrahim (a.s.) and the books of other Prophets (a.s.) are there with the Imams (a.s.). The Imams (a.s.) recite the Books as did the Prophets (a.s.) of those times and are also familiar with their commentaries and interpretations.

Jaweria bin Mushir narrates that he, with others, was returning with Hazrat Ali (a.s.) after battling with the excommunicated (*Khawarij).* When they reached near Babel, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " Speed away from this place! This is the place where Allah's curse descended thrice and also it is the land whre pagan worship first started in the world!"

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said that the time for the *Asr* prayer was running out and they were still not out of the precincts of *Babel.* We were rushing fast, but the sun sank in the West before we could offer our prayer. The time for the *Asr* prayer, therefore, was over. However the Imam (a.s.) asked the men to do the ablution for the prayer. Jaweria was astonished to see that Hazrat Ali (a.s.), pointing his finger toward the already setting sun, brought it back on the horizon and we offered the *Asr prayer* standing behind him. Then the sun set once again, immediately thereafter, and the sky was aglow with the stars. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " O Jaweria! Don't be so much surprised! Allah has said, ' *Fasabbeh beisme Rabbekal Azeem'* I called Him with His Great (*Azeem)* name. For my sake He made the sun reverse its journey!"

Safar narrates that he, along with others, reached a place called *Aaqool* in the company of Hazrat Ali (a.s.). They found a dry and withering tree there. Hazrat Ali(a.s.) touched the tree and said, " Return to your pristine condition with Allah's orders!" Suddenly the tree put on fresh branches and fruits of the shape of guava fruit on the branches..The next day when we looked at the tree, it was fresh and green.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that Imam Hassan (a.s.) was on his way to Mecca for *Umrah,* the Minor Pilgrimage. One of the sons of Zubair was travelling along with him. They rested for a while under the shade of a tree. The son of Zubair said, " How I wish, the tree was bearing fruits that we ate them!"

Imam Hasan (a.s.) asked him, " Do you really want to eat the fruits?"The son of Zubair said, " Yes! O Master! I have a desire to eat the fruits."

Imam Hassan (a.s.) raised his hands towards the sky and prayed. Lo and behold! The tree was instantly loaded with the fruits! One of the camel drivers said, " What a magic that fruits appear on the barren tree!"

The Imam (a.s.) said, " Don't call it magic. The Prophet (a.s.)'s son's prayer has been answered by Allah!"

Salman ibne Khalid narrates that he, along with others, was on a journey with Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). They reached near a dried date palm. The Imam (a.s.) ordered the tree, " O tree! With the Orders of Allah, let us taste of your fruits!" Immediately the tree put on fresh and juicy dates that fell to the ground. Every person in the party ate to their fill. Abd

Allah Balqi said, “ O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! What we had heard happening for Hazrat Maryam (a.s.), we have seen happen before our eyes today!”

Hassan bin Abdallah wanted Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) to show him his miracle. The Imam (a.s.) noticed that there was a tree nearby. He asked Hassan to go near the tree and tell that the Imam (a.s.) wanted it to come to him. Hassan did likewise. The tree, rending the soil holding its roots, proceeded fast towards the Imam (a.s.). The Imam (a.s.) ordered the tree to return to its original place, which it did!

Hassan narrates from Abu Baseer that one day he was in the presence of Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) when he asked him, “ O Master! Are you the Vicegerent of the Prophet (a.s.)?”

The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ No doubt! I am the successor of the Prophet (a.s.).”

Abu Baseer said, ‘ The Prophet (a.s.) was the successor of the earlier Prophets (a.s.) and had all the characteristics of theirs in him. Similarly these characteristics should be there in you too!”

The Imam (a.s.) said, “ No doubt! They are there!”

Abu Baseerasked, “ O Imam (a.s.)! Can you bring back the dead to life and give light to the eyes of a blind person?”

The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ Yes! With Allah’s orders such thungs can happen.” Then the Imam (a.s.) called Abu Baseer near him and touched his eyes with his fingers. The sight of both his eyes was instantly restored. The Imam (a.s.) asked him, “ Do you wish to remain with the restored eyesight? Or you wish to return to the former condition to be eligible for entry to the Heaven?”

Abu Baseer said, “ I want to be back to my earlier condition!”

Ali bin Mugheera narrates that in Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s) was at *Mina* when he passed near a woman who, along with her children, was lamenting about the death of her cow. The Imam (a.s.) asked her the reason for her sorrow.

The woman said, “ My children are orphaned and the cow was the only source of sustenance for us.”

The Imam (a.s.) said, “ Shall I put the cow back to life for you?”

The Woman said, “ Yes “

The Imam (a.s.) offered two *Rakat* of prayer, went near the cow and kicked it, saying, “ *Qum beizn Allah! – Rise with Allah’s Orders”* The cow was restored to life.

Seeing this the woman cried, “ You are no doubt, Eesa ibne Marium (a.s.)!” The Imam (a.s.) mingled with the crowd discreetly to avoid the attention of the people.

- Dawood bin Katheer narrates that once he left home with his wife to go the presence of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). On the way his wife expired. He went to the Imam (a.s.) and related the tragic incident.
- The Imam (a.s.) said, “ Go! And you will find your wife is having her meal.
- Dawood went back to the place where he had left his wife. He, no doubt, found her busy eating.

It is narrated from Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) that one day his father, Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), was proceeding towards *Areed* when a pious, grey-bearded person met him on the way. The Imam (a.s.), seeing the person, went forward respectfully, greeted him and kissed his forehead and the hand. The reverend person gave some advice to the Imam (a.s.). The person who met Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) was none other than Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.).

Samaa narrates that one day, after the demise of Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.), he went to the presence of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). He said, “ Do you wish to see my late father?” Samaa said,” Yes!” The Imam (a.s.) said, “ Enter that room.”

Entering the room, Samaa found Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) sitting there. Then the Imam (a.s) said that after Hazrat Ali (a.s) was martyred, some Shias approached Imam Hassan (a.s.) and asked certain questions. After giving the replies the Imam (a.s) said, “ Will you recognize my father, if you see him?” The persons said they would, certainly. The Imam (a.s.) said, “ Remove the curtain in front of you!” They removed the curtain and found Hazrat Ali (a.s.) sitting there.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) nsrrstes that when Hazrat Ali (a.s.) decided to proceed for the battle of *Siffin,* he crossed the river *Euphrates* and reached near a hill.. It was the time of *Asr* prayer and therefore he did his ablution mandatory prior to any prayer. The call for prayer, the *Adhaan,* was given when the hill broke asunder and a loud sound came,” O Vicegerent of the Last Prophet (a.s.)! O Chief of the believers! Greetings to you!”

In reply the Imam (a.s.) said, “ My greeting too, O brother *Shamoun bin Hamoun,* the Vicegerent of Eesa (a.s.) ibne Marium*!* How are you!”

In reply Shamoun said, “ Alhamdu Lillah!” He also said that he was awaiting the arrival of Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) that he comes and helps Hazrat Ali (a.s)’s son and Vicegerent. He added, “ O Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)! If those people had realised your position in the eyes of the Creator, they would never have thought of fighting with you. If the persons, who have come forward to help you, had known about your status, they would fight in your cause till any part of their bodies remained!”

Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) offered his prayer. Amongst his companions there were Ammar bin Yassir, Malik e Ashtar, Ibne Abbas etc. They asked him, " O Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)! Whose voice was that?" He replied, " It was *Shamoun the Vicegerent of Hazrat Eesa (a.s.)."*

Ibada Asadi narrates that, once he went to the presence of Hazrat Ali (a.s.). The Imam was busy conversing with a person. After the person departed, he asked the Imam (a.s.) who that person was.
He replied, " He was *Haroon (a.s.), the Vicegerent of Hazrat Moosa (a.s.)!"*

It is narrated from Hazrat Ali (a.s) that at the time of his demise the Prophet (a.s.) told him that after giving him the last bath, the *Ghusl,* he should be put in a sitting posture. Then he may be asked any questions Hazrat Ali (a.s.) liked to ask.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that he accompanied his father, Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.), to Mecca. On the way they found a person who had a chain around his neck and another person was pulling him. The person with the chain was crying and asking for water. The other person was saying, " O! Accursed person! There is no water for you!" This was the same person who fought with Hazrat Ali (a.s.) in *Siffin* and raised the Holy Quran on the lance..

Abu Hamza Shimali narrates that once he was in the presence of Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) when some birds came there. The Imam (a.s.) asked, " O Abu Hamza! Do you understand what these birds are saying? They are singing the praises of Allah and claiming for the day's sustenance!"

Fazeel bin Yasaar narrates that he went to Imam jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) when a pair of pigeons came there. The Imam (a.s.) asked Fazeel if he knew what the birtds were telling. When Fazeel replied in the negative, the Imam (a.s.) said, " The male is telling to the female that there is nothing more dear to him that her! But this Imam (a.s.), our Master, is more dear to me than even you are!"

Mohammed bin Muslim narrates that one day he was in the presence of Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) when a pair of pigeons came and started conversing with the Imam (a.s.) and flew away. He asked the Imam (a.s.) about what transpired between them.

The Imam (a.s.) said, " O Mohjammed bin Muslim! Allah has made all the animals more obedient than the human beings to us. The male pigeon was suspicious of its female about her chastity. The female was not able to convince the male about her good character. Therefore, the female asked the male that they would seek my judgement on the matter..

I told the male pigeon that his female was chaste and he should trust her. This convinced him and the pair flew away happily."

Salman Jafferi narrates that he was sitting with Imam Reza (a.s.) in his garden. At that time a bird came, started rolling on the ground. The Imam (a.s.) went inside the house for a while. On his return, he asked me, “ O Salman! Do you know what this bird was complaining about?” I said, “ I don’t know!”

The Imam (a.s.) said,,” A snake was eating away its chicks. Even today the snake came to swallow its xhicks..The bird came to complain to me about the snake. I went and killed the snake!”

Ahmed bin Haroon narrates that once Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) came to my tent and left his horse near the rope of the tent and started conversing with me. Suddenly the horse made a loud noise. The Imam (a.s.) smiled hearing this and told to the horse, “ Go relieve yourself and come back!” The horse went some distance away from the tent, relieved itself and came back. The Imam (a.s.) said, “ O Ibne Haroon! You know that Allah has given more miracles to Mohammed (a.s.) and the descendents of Mohammed (a.s.) than to Dawood (a.s.) and the progeny of Dawood (a.s.). “

Mohammed bin Muslim narrates that he was travelling with Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) from Mecca to Medina when a wolf came down a hill and running towards the Imam (a.s.)’s horse. It raised the forelimbs sky-wards and put its face to the ground. The Imam (a.s.) bent down and heard what the wolf way saying. He then told something to the wolf.. The wolf was satisfied and ran away. The Imam (a.s.) then asked me what had transpired between him and the wolf. When I said that I couldn’t comprehend anything, the Imam (a.s.) said, “ The wolf’s female is in the pains of delivery. It said that we are the resolvers of difficulties and it wanted me to pray that the delivery became easy for its female. It also wanted me to pray that its off springs don’t cause harm to our Shias.”

It is narrated that one day Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) was sitting with his companions when one female deer, a doe, came complaining. The Imam (a.s.) asked the companions about what the animal was saying. When the companions expressed their ignorance, the Imam (a.s.) said,
“ The deer said that a certain Qureishi has captured its little one, the fawn. She requested me to recommend its release so that it can be suckled. It would return the fawn to the Qureishi after feeding it.”

The Imam (a.s.) then asked his companions to accompany him to the Qureishi’s house. He called the person and told him to release the fawn that it would get a feed from its mother and comes back. The Qureishi brought the cub, the deer fed it and returned to the man. The Imam (a.s.) asked the Qureishi to give the little fawn to him. The man readily agreed. The Imam (a.s.) then returned the fawn to its mother. The deer raised its head towards the Heaven as if it was saying a prayer. The companions asked the Imam (a.s.), what the deer was saying.

The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ The deer was praying to Allah that the way we helped her to get its little one, our children too be safe with us!”

Yunus bin Tabian narrates that once he and some other persons were in the company of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). The Imam (a.s.) observed," Allah has made us the masters of the treasures of the earth." Then he hit the ground with his foot and gold emerged out of it.

We said, " O master! When you own such treasures, why your Shias are in abject penury!"

The Imam (a.s.) said, " The wealth of this world is transitory! We don't prefer transitory gains for our Shias. The wealth of the Hereafter is Permanent, that is in store for our friends!"

It is narrated that one day Hazrat Ali (a.s.) was seated in the *Koofa Mosque* with his companions They asked him, " How is that more wealth and riches have been bestowed by Allah on your foes than your friends.?"

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied, " Do you think that we aver the worldly riches, and that Allah is not bestownig them on us! " Saying this, he picked up a handful of pebbles from the ground. They saw that all the pebbles turned into precious stones.

Hazrat Al (a.s.)i then said, " If we wish, the entire surface of the earth will turn into jewels But we are not fond of worldly riches! " Saying this, he threw all the precious stones on the ground and they again turned into pebbles.

Abdu Samad bin Ali narrates that a person went to Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) and said that he was a sooth-sayer. The Imam (a.s.) told him that he would tell him of a person who has, since you have arrived here, has travelled around fourteen worlds, each one thrice as large as
This!"

The man asked, " Who could be such a person?"

The Imam (a.s.) said, " I am that person! If you ask I can tell you in detail what you have eaten today and what all you have hidden in your house!"

Ali bin Hissan says that while he was at *Sammarah* he heard that a person was arrested and brought from Syria with the accusation that he had claims to prophethood. Ali went to the person and made som inquiries with him. The man said, " I was at the place in Syria where the severed head of Imam Hussain (a.s.) was kept. While I was offering prayer, a person appeared and said,' Get up and come with me!' I went with the person. After a while we reached the *Mosque of Koofa.* He asked me if I recognised the place. I replied in the affirmative. Both of us offered prayer there and were blessed with the sighting of the Prophet (a.s.).Then we reached *Mecca* and performed Haj. Immediately after the Haj I found myself again in Syria and the person I had accompanied had vanished. The following year same person again met me and took me round, as he did

earlier, and brought me back to Syria. I was surprised and under an oath of the Creator asked him as to who he was? He stood with his head bent for a while and then said, ‘ I am Mohammed bin Ali bin Moosa (a.s.)!’ This news spread like wildfire and Abdul Malik called and imprisoned me.”

I asked him to write down all the details and petition for his release. .I provided a quill and ink to the man. He wrote down the details and sent the petition to Abdul Malik. Abdul Malik wrote back saying that one who could take him round to all the places in one night, can as well release him!

When I heard this outcome of his petition, I started crying but I also tried to commiserate with the person. The next day I went to the gaol to inquire about the person. The gaolers were confounded as to where the prisoner would have vanished despite the strict vigilance.

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Hafs Tammar narrates that when Maala bin Khanees was to be executed, he went to the presence of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). The Imam (a.s.) siad, “ Maala did not pay heed to what I said and is bearing the consequences. One day he was very morose. I asked him if he was worried because of separation from his family?” He replied in the affirmative. After a while I put my hand over his face and asked him,” Where are you now?’ He replied that he was with his family. Again after sometime I put my hand over his face and asked him where he was? He replied that he was with me in Medina.
Then the Imam (a.s.) told him, “ O Maala! One who protects our secrets Allah protects him Do not reveal our secrets to others. One who betrays us, meets a very sorry end. He will either be executed or incarcerated for long terms. You have revealed our secrets and you must prepare yourself for your execution!”

It is narrated by Abd Allah bin Sanan that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ We own a pond that lies between Basra and Yemen. Would you like to see it?”

Abd Allah said, “ I shall certainly like to see the pond!”

The Imam (a.s.) held his hand and brought him out of Medina and hit his foot on the ground. A canal became visible, one side of which very pure water flowed and on the other side flowed milk of the highest purity. In the center of the canal flew a beverage of red hue. The scene was very attractive.

Abd Allah said, “ My Master! Where is this canal!”

The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ Allah has referred of this canal in the Holy Quran. This is one of the canals in the Heaven!”

Abdallah noticed very pretty *houris* on the branches of the trees along the banks of the canal. They held goblets of different hues in their hands. The Imam (a.s.) looked towards one tree which bent low and the *houri* thereon proferred to him a cup from which the

Imam (a.s.) drank the beverage and gave some to him too. .He had never tasted such a delicious *sherbet.*

The Imam (a.s.) said, “ This will be the resting place for our *Shias* when they enter the Heaven.Their thirst will be quenched with the *Sharab e Tahoor* and our enemies, when they die, will be taken to the *Valley of Barhoot* where they will be fed on *Zhaqoom* (a bitter fruit) and they will get *Hameem* (very hot water) to drink. May Allah protect people from the hardships of this valley!”

Jabir Jaufi narrates that he asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) to tell him about the journey made by Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) under Allah’s orders to the Dominions (*Malkoot)* of the earth and the Firmament.He was sitting with his head bent when the Imam (a.s.) pointed skywards with his finger and said, “ Look up! “ When he looked up, he saw the roof of the house developed a hole and there was a strange light in the sky. The Imam (a.s.) said, “ Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) had seen the *malkoot* of the sky and the earth like this!”. The Imam (a.s.) asked me to look down. I did, and found the roof of the house intact again.

Then the Imam (a.s.) held my hand and took me to another place and said, “ Do you know what place is this! This is the place where *Dhual Qarnain* went, this is called *Zulmat* (the region of darkness).” Jabir said, “ O Master! Can I open my eyes?” The Imam (a.s.) said, “ You may open your eyes, but you cannot see anything in the darkness!”

Then the Imam (a.s.) took him to another place. He said, “ This is the *aab e Hayat* (the water of Eternal Life) which Hazrat Khizr (a.s.) had drunk” Then the Imam (a.s.) added, “ These are the domains of the sky and the earth that Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) was taken around. “

Then the Imam (a.s.) took Jabir on a trip to many other worlds in the universe. .Alas, the Imam (a.s.) asked him to open his eyes. When he opened his eyes he found himself in the same place from where they went. Jabir asked the Imam (a.s.), “ My Master! How much time we have spent going round?” the Imam (a.s.) replied, “ Three hours!”

Abu Baseer narrates that he went to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). The Imam (a.s.) stamped his foot on the ground when a river appeared at that spot. On the bank of the river there were boats made of silver. We boarded those boats and reached a place where there were tents made of silver. The Imam (a.s.) entered all the tents pitched there and came out. He said that the first tent he entered at the place belonged to the Prophet (a.s.). The second was for Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and the third that of Hazrat Fatima Zehra (a.s.), the fourth of Hazrat Khadija (a.s.), fifth of Hazrat Hassan (a.s.), sixth of Hazrat Hussain (a.s.), the seventh for Hazrat Ali ibnal Hussain (a.s.), the eighth belongs to my revered father (a.s.) and the ninth is for me. Whosoever of us departs from the world, rests in his tent here.

Saleh ibne Saeed narrates that Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) was made to camp in the *Serai of the Faqirs.* He went to the presence of the Imam (a.s.) and said, “ O Master! I am very sorry

that you have been accommodated in such a place. The cruel people have tried to belittle you!"

The Imam (a.s.) said, " O Saleh! You still don't know us!" Then he he pointed in the direction opposite him. Saleh saw a beautiful garden in which canals of fresh water were flowing. There were groups of *houris* from the *Heaven* everywhere. There were fruits and flowers of all hues and fragrance in plenty. Saleh was surprised at this spectacle.

The Imam (a.s.) then said, " Wherever we are, all these things are available to us!"

A reliable source quites Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) as saying, " the world is like a walnut for us that we can turn it the way we want!"

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that *Du al Qarnain* was given the authority to select one of the two types of clouds (*Sahab)*—the *Sahab e Zalool (* the soft clouds) or the *Sahab e Saab* (the hard clouds). *Du al Qarnain* selected *Sahab e Zalool* and left the *Sahab e Saab* for the Holy Imams (a.s.).

The Imam (a.s.) was asked, " What is *Sahab e Saab?"*

The Imam (a.s.) said, " It is the cloud that has thunder, lightning, and thunderbolt. The *Saheb al Amr, the Twelfth Imam (a.s.),* will ride on these clouds on his weekly trips of the Seven layers of the universe."

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that when Allah wishes, He Creates the Imam (a.s.).Then he asks an angel to take the beverage from the *Teht al Arsh* to the Imam (a.s.) for drinking. When the Imam (a.s.) drinks this beverage, his successor is conceived. He keeps quiet in the womb of the mother for forty days. After this period he starts to speak from within the womb. After birth, he observes the actions of all the creations.

The Imam (a.s.) also said that when the mother of the Imam (a.s.) is pregnant, she feels a kind of laziness and hears a voice congratulating her of the arrival of the wise and sagacious son. After this, there are no symptoms of pregnancy in the mother. After completion of the nine months, the mother of the Imam (a.s.) again hears a voice and only the parents see a light in their surroundings. Then the Imam (a.s.) is born. After the birth, the baby sneezes thrice and after every sneeze utters, " *Al hamdu Lillah"* loudly. The Imam (a.s.) is born naturally circumcised."

Safar narrates from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " There is a city of Allah on the rear of the West, by name *Ja Balqa.* There are people of 70,000 Faiths (*Ummats*) living there. The population of every faith is equal to the entire population of this world. They never ever indulge in any sins or misdeeds. They don't have to do do any work other than uttering *curses on the enemies of the Ahl al Bayt!*"

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said that the other side of the sea there is a city whose width is equal to the journey made by the sun in forty days. The inhabitants of the city are unaware of sinful acts and they even don't know the name of Satan. Whenever they meet us, they ask lot of questions and are very pleased to hear our answers. They ask as to when the Last, the Twelfth Imam (a.s.), will arrive. These people keep themselves busy in the worship of Allah. They recite the Holy Quran as instructed by us. They are our true followers. These people will join the *Jehad* when the Twelfth Imam (a.s.) makes his appearance to banish evil from the face of the earth. No weapon will have any effect on their bodies. Their swords are made of such tempered steel that if they hit a rock with them, the rock will get sliced.
The Imam (a.s.), after his appearance, will be accompanied by these troops to Rome, Turkey, Deelam and Tabriz. Then he will make a skirmish on a place lying between *Ja Balqa* and *Ja Balsa.* These are the two cities, one in the East and the other in the West. People of all the places will be invited to profess the Faith of Islam. A time will come when the entire population of the world would have embraced Islam.

Imam Hassan (a.s.) says that there are two cities, one in the East and the other in the West. Around each of the two cities there is a rampart made of steel. Every rampart has seventy gates and from every gate seventy thousand caravans enter. The people of every caravan speak a different tongue. But we can understand and converse in all these languages. None other than my brother Hussain (a.s.) and me can visit these cities.

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " O Abu Dharr! Allah has compared my Ahl al Bayt to the Canoe of Noah. Whosoever boarded the Canoe, got deliverence.. . The dissenters got drowned in the rough waters of the storm. The people who board the ship of my Ahl al Bayt's love and obedience, will get free of the curse of infidelity. .Others who turn away from them, will drown in the sea of wretchedness and depravity. The only way to deliverence is through love and affection (*Mawaddath)* for us."

Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.) wrote to Ishaq bin Ismael, " The duties made mandatory for you by Allah are His favors on you because He is not in need of your prayers. His purpose in making prayer compulsory has been to distinguish between the righteous and the evil. He gauges the righteous through the yardstick of regularity in offering of prayers and awards them the higher place and position.

Therefore, it is mandatory on you also to perform *Haj, give Zakat*, fast during the month of *Ramadhan,* offer mandatory prayers and have Faith in the *Wilayeth of the Ahl al Bayt.* For you the entrance to all virtue is through the obedience of the *Ahl al Bayt.* If Mohammed (a.s.) and his Vicegerents (a.s.) were not there, the people would have been in gross ignorance like the animals. Can you enter a city without going through the gateway? Allah has appointed the *Imams (a.s.)* after the Prophet (a.s.) for the Guidance of the people. It is His Favor on the mankind. Allah says in the Holy Quran, ' Today I have completed the Faith of Islam, completed all the favors and bounties for you and Am satisfied with it.'."

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Ibne Babawiyah narrates from a reliable source that Imam Reza (a.s.) has quoted Hazrat Ali (a.s.) saying that the Prophet (a.s.) had observed. " Allah has not created others better than us." Hazrat Ali asked, " O Prophet of Allah! Are you superior than the angel, Gjibraeel? " The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " O Ali (a.s.)! Allah has made the Prophets (a.s.) and the Messengers superior than the angels and I have the distinction of superiority over all other prophets (a.s.).. After me, you and the Imams (a.s.) in your progeny have been bestowed with superiority. .The angels are all at our service! O Ali (a.s.)! The angels who are stationed in the Heaven, keep praying for the deliverence of our friends. Ali (a.s.)! If we were not created, Allah would have created neither Hazrat Adam (a.s.) nor Hazrat Hawwa (a.s.); neither there would be the Jannat nor the Jehannum, even the earth and the skies would not have come into existence! And how is it possible that we are not superior to the angels that we had the Knowledge of the Creator, Allah much before they did. Our Spirits were the First Creations of the Almighty before anything else came into existence! We have been the first who bore witness to His Unity and busied ourselves in His Worship and Prayer! Then, later on, the angels were created. We were all in the form of a Light. When the angels saw us, they wondered very much..Observing their wonderment, and fearing that they might think of us as the greatest, our Light said," *Subhan Allah!* hearing this Glorification, they too started emulating. Fearing that they might include us, too, in the Glorification, we uttered, "*La Ilaha il Allah".* The angels now understood that the Glorification can only be for Allah. To preculde the chance of their terming us the greatest, we uttered, " *Allaho Akbar "*! The angels understood what we meant, and followed suit. We said, " *La haula wa laquwwata illa Billa"* that the angels understood that all the power that we can exercise is given by Allah, and none else! The purpose of saying this also was that the angels might start thinking wrongly that our power was perhaps because of our ceaseless supplication and prayer! In the end we said, " *Alhamdo Lillah, Praise be to Allah,* This is how the angels learned from us the method of Glorifying Allah.Then Hazrat Adam (a.s.) was created by Allah and He put our *Nur* in him. Because our *Nur* was with Hazrat Adam (a.s.), Allah ordered the angels to prostrate before him. The angels then prostrated to Hazrat Adam (a.s.)!"

"Therefore we are, because of precedence in our creation and knowledge of Allah, superior to the angels. When Jibrael took me to the Firmament, he said the *Adhan & Iqamah* and requested me to lead the prayer. I asked him, ' Do you consider me superior to yourself?' Jibrael said, ' Of course! Allah has made the prophets (a.s.) superior to the angels and you are the most superior of all the prophets!'Then, when we reached the *Hijab e Noor* (the Curtain of Light) Jibrael said,' You must enter this place alone. I am not permitted to go any further!'I asked him,'Are you departing leaving me alone?' Jibrael replied, ' If I venture any further all my feathers and hair will get burnt!'

" Then I entered the *Dariya e Noor* (the River of Light). This is the place where the angels don't enter. I heard a voice there saying, ' O Mohammed (a.s.)!' I said, '*Labbaek, Ya Rub* (At Your beck and call, O Allah!). Allah said, ' O Mohammed (a.s.)! You are My Creation! I Am your Lord! Worship Me only and depend on Me! You are My Noor that I have sent to the people as My Manifestation. I have created the Heaven for you and your Descendents.There are elevated positions for your Vicegerents (a.s.) and great rewards fot their Shias!' I asked, ' Who are my Vicegerents?' The voice came, ' The names of your

Vicegerents have been engraved on the *Saq e Arsh* (the Shank of the Firmament)' I looked in that direction and found written in the gold the names of all the Vicegerents (a.s.) starting with the name of Ali (a.s.) and ending with that of *Mehdi (a.s.), the Last of the Imams (a.s.).* I asked, 'O my Allah! Are all these my Vicegerents?' The voice came, ' They are all my *Aulia* who will be My *Hujjat (* Representatives) for the people after you. I shall keep my *Faith and Religion* flourishing and thriving in the world through them. The last of these Vicegerents (a.s.), *the Qaim,* will cull the world of all My enemies and purify it. He will be the sovereign of the East and the West. His sway will be there till the world lasted'"

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that whenever Jibrael visited the Prophet (a.s.), he used to sit politely like a slave. He never entered without obtaining the permission of the Prophet (a.s.)

Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.) narrates that someone asked the Prophet (a.s.), " Is Ali (a.s.) superior or the angels?"

The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " A person who has true love for Ali (a.s.) in his heart is superior to the angels!"

Imam Jafare e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that one day a Jew came to the presence of the Prophet (a.s.) and asked, " Tell me! Are you, and your Vicegerents (a.s.), superior to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.)?"

The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " Praising oneself is not right. But, since you have asked the question, I shall have to give the reply! Therefore, listen, and listen with care!

- When Hazrat Adam (a.s.) committed the mistake, then he offered a prayer to this effect: ' O Allah! For the sake of Mohammed (a.s.), and his progeny, forgive my mistake!' Allah, therefore pardoned Adam (a.s.).'
- When Noah (a.s)'s Ark was caught in the cyclone, he prayed to Allah,' O the Creator! For the sake of Mohammed (a.s.) and his progeny, guide my ark safely out of the cyclone!' His prayer was answered.
- When Nimrod consigned Ibrahim (a.s.), the Friend of Allah, to the fire, Ibrahim (a.s) prayed, ' O Creator of Ibrahim (a.s.)! For the sake of Mohammed (a.s) and his progeny, make the fire cool on me!" The fire went cold.
- When the magicians in the court of the Pharoah attacked Moosa (a.s.) with their serpents, Moosa (a.s.) got scared and prayed, ' O Allah! For the sake of Mohammed (a.s.) and his Vicegerents (a.s.) deliver me from this danger!' Moosa (a.s.) was ordered to throw his staff. He complied, the staff became a bigger serpent and swallowed all the serpents of the magicians.. Moosa (a.s.)'s prayer was thus answered.

O Jew! If Moosa (a.s.) comes today and does not accept me as the Prophet (a.s.), then his own prophethood would go void! O Jew! I have a descendent; when he appears with the Order of Allah, Eesa (a.s.) will descend from the Heaven and offer prayers standing behind him.

An authentic source records that on the day when Allah took an oath from the progeny of Adam (a.s.), He asked all the prophets (a.s.) and the angels, “ Am I not your Creator, your Lord? Isn’t Mohammed (a.s.) your Prophet? Aren’t Ali (a.s) and his Immaculate Progeny (a.s.), your *Imams*?”

All of them replied in unison, “ Definitely! Yes!!”

Those prophets who took the earliest initiative in affirming this, were put in the rank of *aulu al azm (*The superior) prophets. The angels who took precedence over the other angels in responding, they became *Muqarrabeen,* or the angels closest to Allah!

The prophet of Allah (a.s.) said, “ O Abu Dharr! Please remember what I am advising you and act on it! There are two blessings that men are oblivious of! One, the health of the body and the second is the liesure they get! They don’t make good use of these two blessings and repent later on!

And Abu Dharr! Be thankful for five things and appreciate them:

1. Appreciate that youth is before old age! Because there is no pleasure of prayer in the old age!
2. Appreciate good health before you fall ill, because prayer can be best offered when one is in good health.
3. Appreciate affluence before you become a beggar that you might do charity in the name of Allah!
4. Appreciate the leisure you have, before you get busy that you offer prayers to your hearts content.
5. Appreciate life before death catches up with you, that you cannot do anything once you are dead.

And O Abu Dharr! Don’t delay doing good deeds! What good turn you have decided to do, do it today! Who knows, you may be there tomorrow or not. O Abu Dharr! There were lots of people there, but they are no more now! There were lots of them who kept their tasks fot the morrow! But before the morrow came, they were no more!

- O Abu Dharr! If you know the speed with which the steed of death is running and the speed with which it is taking you closer to death, you will abstain from lots of wishes and desires!
- O Abu Dharr! This world is like a *serai*! Spend life like a traveller in it. Don’t consider it your land. Your land is only the small area of the grave, and always think of inhabiting it!
- O Abu Dharr! In the morning stop thinking of the evening! It might happen that your evening might not meet you!
- O Abu Dharr! Make good use of your health, before ill health catches up with you! Make good use of life, before death overtakes you! Who knows, tomorrow your name might be in the list of the living, or the roster of the dead! Or on the Day of

Judgement, whether your name will be on the list of the good people or with the sinners.

- O Abu Dharr! Do whatever good turns, now, when you live. Don't neglect the Hereafter by chasing and accumaliting transitory riches. The persons to whom you leave behind the riches, will not praise you for your largesse!
- O Abu Dharr! I am wondering that people worry at the slightest hardship! How will they bear the Hellfire and hardships of *Jahannum!* I see the people spending sleepless nights to acquire the worldly pleasure! I also wonder seeing people sleep and neglect their chances of acquiring the pleasures of the Heaven as a recompense for their prayers.
- O Abu Dharr! Appreciate the short span of life given to you! Be miserly in not spending it on the transitory wealth of this world.

One very well known astrologer came to the presence of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and said," I am a sooth sayer! I have heard that you too predict about the events of the future! Do you want me to ask you some questions or wish to answer my queries?"

The Imam (a.s.) said, " Only Allah knows what is not in our present knowledge and sight! But I know whatever He has taught me! If you have claims of knowing the unknown, tell me what is enclosed in my fist.' Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) put before him his folded fist..

The man thought for a long while. Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " You are unable to answer!"

The man replied, " This is a very small matter! I was, in fact, wondering, as to how, whatever is in your hand, has come there. In your folded fist there is the nest of a bird and its egg from the peak of a mountain which has never been scaled by any human being! I am really wondering how you have brought it almost in the time needed for the winking of the eye."

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) opened his fist that did contain the egg and the nest! Hazrat (a.s.) folded his palm once again and asked him," Now tell me, what is there in my folded fist?"
- The astrologer said, " The nest and the egg have been restored to their original place on the peak of the mountain!"
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) opened his fist and, there was nothing there!
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) told to the man, " I shall ask you another question, if you agree to reply truthfully!"
- The man promised to tell the truth.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked, " From where you have learnt your tricks?"
- The astrologer said, " This is the first question you have asked, otherwise I wouldn't have been obliged to reply. This skill is because of a mystic exercise I had undertaken. The exercise is that whatever my base instinct (*nafs)* desires, I persevere and insist on its fulfillment.

- The Imam (a.s.) asked, “ What does your *nafs* say about becoming a Muslim?”
- The man refused to reply.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ Why didn’t you persevere and insist on becoming a Muslim?”
- The man wondered and converted to Islam.
- Now Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked, “ Tell me, what is there in my closed fist?”
- The man thought for a long while and was unable to give any reply. He said, “ By accepting Islam, I have put myself to great loss. I have lost the faculty that I possessed earlier!”
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ O Person! You have not lost anything! In fact, you have gained! The *tazkia nafs* (purification of the mind) that you have undergone shall bring you great benefits in this life and the life Hereafter.You will have an august position in the Other World, which I guarantee.

For the description of the above, study of the three objectives is essential, which are dealt in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6
THE OBJECTIVES

THE FIRST OBJECTIVE – GOOD DEEDS

The purpose of these admonishions is to bring the attention of the human beings towards good deeds and stopping them from having unreasonable desires and wishes.

There are four things that are the impediments for the good deeds of human beings:

1.**Procrastination in doing good deeds:**

The Satan misguides man to think that he has plenty of time. Prayer can best be done when the person is old, he must spend the youth in enjoying the pleasures of the world.

2. Avoiding repentence (*Tark e Tauba*):

The man will not repent and abstain from the wrong actions. He keeps living under the misconception that he has plenty of time to repent and reform, till death overtakes him.

3.Avarice for accumulating wealth and riches:

When a person become totally oblivious of his gain or loss in search of wealth, it is natural that he forgets Allah and His Prophet (a.s.) in the process. He will busy himself in running after the chimera of wealth day and night. He depends more on his own faculties to amass wealth totally forgetting that it is Allah who endows whatever a person posesses.

4.The callousness of heart and forgetting about the Hereafter:

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that man has two traits that one should avoid cultivating: The first is doing things dictated by baser instincts, and the second, working under distant hopes
(*Tool e aml*). The baser instincts prevent a person from accepting the truths and the distant hopes make one forgetful of the transitory nature of this life in the world. One who works under distant hopes, is not on the right path. The welfare of the people is in abstinence and firm belief. The cause for the downfall of a society is in its people having distant hopes and practice of parsimony.

The Prophet (a.s.) told to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) that with callousness four things spring:

1. Coldness of the eyes,
2. .Selfishness
3. Excess of desires and
4. Wish to live longer in the world.

The Prophet also said that with age two traits become more pronounced in men. The first is greed and the second distant hopes for the future.

The one remedy for these two aberrations is that one should always keep his death in view and realise that everything in the world is transitory. They should know that death is as much near the old as it is with the youth. When there is a death in his surroundings, one should give a thought that his turn might be around the corner when everything he has strived to acquire would be left behind. When one looks around himself, he finds people with failing health, diminishing eye-sight, debilitated bodies. One should therefore have recourse to studying the sayings of the Prophet (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.) of the transitory nature of this life. Another way of overcoming these traits is to visit the grave yard occasionally which will remind one of the ultimate destination and the futility of running after worldly things.

It is narrated that a youth by name of Ababa bin Rubai Ansari used to regularly visit Abd Allah bin Abbas. He used to treat the youth with respect and give him a place near himself to sit.

People told to Hazrat Abd Allah bin Abbas that the youth was a thief of the shrouds from the fresh graves in the community graveyard and that he must not give him so much respect.

- Abd Allah bin Abbas wanted to cinfirm this matter by himself.. He therefore visited the graveyard in the darkness of nights. One night he found the youth coming there. From his hiding he saw the youth lie down in an empty grave and say, " O Allah! I am a sinful person. I know that one day I will be brought to this place and buried in one of the graves. At that time only You can help me! I have unnecessarily troubled innocent people! On the Day of Reckoning, who else but You can help me? O Munificent Allah! I resolve now that I shall not let sin ever come near me from now on!"

The youth thus cried for some time. When he emerged from the grave, Abd Allah bin Abbas ran towards him and embraced him. From that day he had more respect for the youth.

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says, " One should always remember death. When one thinks of the grave and of the Day of Judgement, then the hardships of life seem easire to bear. The person who counts ' tomorrow' as an essential part of his life, he is, infact, oblivious of the fact of death." He wrote to the people of Egypy, " O Creations of Allah! None can avoid death! Fear death before it catches you unawares! If you don't run away from it, it will get you! Even if you try your best to avoid death, you can't! Death, you must know, is closer to you more than your own shadow!"
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " O people! If animals had known about death as much as you do, then they wouldn't have been so strong and sturdy as they are! Remembering death, they would have gone weak and emaciated!"
- Hazrat Ali (a.s) has said, " When man reaches the last day of his life, he gives his attention to his belongings and says, ' I strived hard to acquire you, I have been very miserly in using you; tell me! Of what use are you to me now?' The reply will be, ' You can take your coffin from me!' Then the man will turn towards his children and say, ' You were very dear to me! I was attending to your needs all the time. Of what help you could be to me now?' They would reply, ' We shall take you to your grave!'" Then he will turn his attention towards his own deeds. ' No doubt! I never gave any thought to performing good deeds! I am repentent now! What help you can give me now!'. His deeds respond, ' We shall be with you from the grave to the Day of Reckoning! We shall not leave you for a moment during the interregnum. If you had been a friend of Allah, a pious person will come near you. The dress of the person will effuse a fragrance. When asked who he was, he would reply,' I am your good deeds. When you you depart from the world, your abode will be the Heaven.' After his death, he will be laid in the grave and buried. Two angels will then enter the grave. Their voices will be sharp like the lightening.thunder. Their eyes will be fiery. They will ask,'Who is your God? What is your Faith? Who is your Prophet (a.s.)?

Who is your Imam (a.s)? If the perosn gave the correct replies, his grave will be widened and a door will be opened towards the Heaven from where the pleasant breeze will reach him. The angels will give him the good news that Allah is Happy with him and he should sleep in peace! But if the person has been a sinner, he would not be able to reply correctly to the questions posed by the angels. The angels will hit him with their fiery maces that the animals of the forest will get scared with the sound of the impact! The angels will open a door from his grave towards the Hell and fire and brim will overwhelm him. He will suffer perpetually from the pressure (*Fishaar*) of the grave. The snakes and vermin will torture him in the grave till the Day of Reckoning!"

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that he said, " Like the other prophets (a.s.) of yore, I too was tending to the flocks of sheep! One day the sheep got scared and stopped grazing. I asked Jibrael the reason for this phenomenon. He said,' One infidel was being punished in his grave at that time. His wailing was audible to all animals, barring men and the Jinn.When the sheep heard the loud wails, they got scared'"
- Also the Imam (a.s.) said, " When a sinner is taken to the grave, he will tell to his comrades, who will not hear him, that Satan led him astray and was unable to help him now! He would complain that his friends gave him false hopes and made him busy with worldly activities. They were now taking him to be buried in mounds of sand and soil! He will complain running after worldly gains he lost the opportunity of acquiring the rewards of the Hereafter..
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " The grave calls people every day! It tells that it is a poor abode, an abode of loneliness and desolation, a home for snakes and reptiles. It says that it is both a Garden of Heaven and also a place with the Fire of Hell! Those who are destined for the grave, which is inevitable, must prepare for what sort of a grave they wish to be interred in! The better the deeds of a person, the better will the interregnum in the grave and in the Hereafter,"
- The Prophet (a.s.) was asked by his companions to tell them who is the wisest, pious person? The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " One who remembers his death the more and prepares himself for the event!"
- Abu Saleh narrates that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " O Abu Saleh! When you give shoulder to a coffin, you must imagine that you are yourself in that coffin and pleading with Allah to send you back to the world that you can make amends for your past sins! Then imagine that Allah has acceded to your wish and has sent you back once over to the world! Now you must see that you refrain from any sinful acts!" Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " I wonder about persons who see people dying around them every day, but they continue with their worldly amusements (*Lah wa laab*) oblivious of the obvious happening around them!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that once Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) went to the grave of Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) and revived him to life. Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) asked him, who he was? He said, ' I am Eesa (a.s.). I wish that you give me a helping hand in the propagation of my faith." Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) replied, " I haven't, as yet, overcome the pain of death. Why do you wish to expose me to the same pain again!"
- It is narrated that the sons of the king of Bani Israel were busy in their prayers. Their prayer consisted in taking a trip of pleasure in the country and praising the Creations

of the Almighty! One day they arrived at a grave that was in ruins. They started praying for the revival of the dead person to life. The dead person raised his head from the grave that was covered with grey hair. He asked them, " Why you people have come here?" They replied, " We want to know from you about what happens to a person at the moment of death?" He said, " It is 99 years since I am dead! But I haven't forgotten the pain of death!" They asked him," What was your age at the time of your death? How your hair has turned grey?" He replied, " At the time of death I was a youth and my hair were black. When you called me now, I thought that the Doomsday has come and with the fear my hair suddenly turned grey!"

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " A person who keeps his shroud ready at home, is not counted among the persons oblivious of their death.Whenever he sets his eyes on the shroud, Allah rewards him."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said that every day an angel proclaims, " O man, take birth for dying, amass wealth for squandering, and construct buildings that they fall into ruins!" Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " When a person reaches the age of forty years, every fresh day tells him to do good deeds that it will not come back to him again and that it is his witness only for the day!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) told to Jabir Jaufi," O Jabir! Give greetings to our Shias and tell them that there is no relationship between us and Allah , and none can be Allah's favorite, unless he is obedient to Him! One who obeys Allah and loves us is our Shia. The one who disobeys Allah is never our Shia, however much he claims to be our follower"
- The Prophet (a.s.) said that on the Day of Judgement every person would be asked four questions: **How did you spend your life?**
- **How you occupied yourself during the time of youth?**
- **From where did you earn your livelihood and how you spent it?**
- **Did you have the love of the Prophet's Ahl al Bayt or not?**

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said that the *Torah* says, " O son of Adam (a.s.)! Prepare your heart for My Obedience that I make your heart contented and not dependent on other creations! I fulfill all your needs! If you make your heart devoid of My Obedience, I shall fill it with the love for the world and don't fulfill your needs. I shall leave you alone with your endeavors!"
- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) said, " The person who seeks Heaven, doesn't like name and fame! One who is afraid of the Hellfire, will never commit sins! One who shuns the world, relieves himself of many cares! "Some creations of Allah are on august positions that they watch the inmates of the Heaven in Heaven and the inmates of the Hell in Hell.With the nightfall, they stand in prayer, their cheeks wet with tears and fear of Allah makes them so weak that people think they are sick.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) passed through a hamlet once. All the people, animals and birds in that place were lying dead. He thought, they must all have died with the curse of Allah! If they had died, one after another, they would certainly have received decent burial. Hazrat Eesa (a.s.)'s disciples said, " O Spirit of Allah! Pray to Allah that He brings them back to life again that we ask them about the cause of the severe punishment inflicted on them. That will be a

lesson for us to take care in our own lives." Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) went to an elevated place and cried aloud, " O inhabitants of the hamlet! With the orders of Allah, respond to me!" One of the dead persons rose and said, " *Labbaek* (at your beck and call)! O Spirit of Allah!" Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) said, " For what acts you have been brought to such wretched condition?" He replied, " We were following *Taghoot* (the Satan) from the depths of our hearts! We denied the existence of Allah! We were the friends of the material world and sure of enjoying it for long! We were busy with our activities of lechery and depravation!" Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) asked, " What sort of love for the world you had?" He replied, " The way a child loves his mother. One night we were sleeping that we found ourselves awaken in the Fire of Doomsday. We all started shouting that we be allowed to come back to the world once again that we make amends for our past sins! A sound proclaimed, ' You are liars!' and the flames of fire encircled us!" Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) told to his disciples, " Eating dry bread and salt is definitely better than the life of sin these people were living! It is better to sleep on the bare floor than the comfortable beds of depravity!"

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that when Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) committed the *Tark e Aula* (the first misdemeanour), he remained in prostrationfor forty days. During this time, he cried and did not raise his head except for prayers. His forehead started bleeding. With excessive crying his eyes too bled. After forty days a sound came," O Dawood (a.s.)! What do you want? If you are hungry, you will be sated, if you are thirsty, water shall be provided. If you are naked, clothes shall be provided. If you have any fear, that fear shall be expelled! Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) said," O my Sustainer! I am a sinner and I am afraid because You are the most Just!" then the Revelation came," O Dawood (a.s.)! Be repentent and earn salvation!" after hearing this Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) started reciting the *Zaboor* and supplicating. With him the trees, the stones and the animals too joined in supplication. He reached a mountain and found Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s.), Prophet busy in prayer inside a cave. When he heard the wails of animals, he understood that Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) had arrived there. Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) went ahead and told to Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s.), if you permit me I shall come near you." Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s.) replied," you are a sinner!" Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) cried inconsolably when a revelation came to Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s.)," Dawood (a.s.) has committed *Tark e Aula* and you should not reprimand him for that because I keep friends with those who repent, and there is none more forgiving than Me." Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s.) took Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) inside his living quarters. Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) asked Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s.) if he ever got the idea of committing a sin. Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s.) said," no." Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) again asked," Are you proud that you never got a thought of committing a sin." Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s) said," no." Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) asked him," have you ever felt the worldly needs in your heart?" Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s.) replied," yes. Sometimes I have such feelings." Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) asked," then how do you overcome these wishes?" Hazrat Huzqeel (a.s.) said," at such moments I enter into the crevice of this mountain and treat myself with whatever I find there, Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) accompanied him into the crevice of the cave and noticed that there was a table of iron there. On that table there were some bones and also a tablet of metal. Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) picked up that tablet. It was engraved on the tablet," I am *Arwai ibne Shalam.* I have ruled for a thousand years, founded thousand citites and slept with

thousand virgins. In the end I was rendered to a condition that the dust is my bed and the stone my pillow! My companions are snakes and scorpions! Therefore whosoever sees me should not be carried away with the attractions of the world!"

THE SECOND OBJECTIVE
DAJJAL ATTACKS

In the last epoch, prior to the Emergence of the *Imam Akhar az Zaman (a.s.),* Dajjal would appear with rebellious attacks.

It has come in the traditions that Dajjal was born during the period of The Prophet of Islam (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) approached him to iinvite him to embrace Islam. But he repudiated the invitation and said, "You are not greater in prophethood than me!" He uttered several such unsavoury words.

The Prophet (a.s.) told him, " You villain! Go out of my sight! You will not budge from your villainy and will never succeed in your evil designs!"

Then the Prophet (a.s.) told to his companions, " Every Prophet (a.s.) had been warning his flock against the machinations of the Dajjal.Allah delayed the appearance of the accursed Dajjal! He has come during the times of my *Ummah and that he will claim false godhood!* He will create great confusion in the minds of people. Remember, your God (Allah) is not one-eyed!.Dajjal will come astride a donkey. The distance between the two ears of the donkey will be a mile. He will have his own self-styled heaven and hell with him. In his retinue there will be a mountain of bread and a canal of water. The Jews, the nomads and women would be his followers. Leaving, Mecca and Medina, Dajjal would travel throughout the world.

Ibne Babawiyah narrates that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) once announced from the pulpit," *Salooni qabl un tafqedooni*- Ask me questions before I get away from you!"

Saasa, a companion of Hazrat Ali (a.s.), asked, " O Vicegerent of the Prophet (a.s.)! When will Dajjal attack?"

The Imam (a.s.) replied, " There are certain signs of Dajjal's presence, which are:

People will stop offering prayers,

dishonesty will be the way of life,

falsehood will become a virtue,

people will mortgage their faith for worldly gains,

usuary and bribery will become legitimate,

imbesiles would rule over the wise,

blood of innocents would be shed,

pride will be taken on acts of oppression,

the rulers will be corrupt,

the scholars will be hypocrite,

adultery will be rampant,

women will rub shoulders with men in doing business,

women will dress like men and men like women,

the liars and treacherous will be respected,

there will be acute famine at the time,

Dajaal will be killed by the one who will have Hazrat Essa (a.s) offering prayer behind him and under his leadership.

After the killing of the Dajjal, there will be a great upheavel!”

Then Isbaq bin Nabata or Kanana stood up and asked the Imam (a.s.), “ Who is Dajjal?”

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied, “ Near the city of Asbahan there is a hamlet called Yahudiah. Dajjal will come from there. His right eye will be damaged. The left eye will shine like a star on his forehead. On the space between his eyes it will be written in bold letters: ” *Kafir* (infidel)”! . Everyone who set his eyes on him will be able to read this. In front of him there will be a mountain of smoke and in his rear too there will be a mountain. People will think that these are mountains of bread. At the time of his emergence there will be acute famine in the world. He will have a white donkey of such huge proportions that with one step it would cover the distance of a mile. Any river negotiated by the donkey would run dry. Dajjal would come shouting at the top of his voice, “ Friends! Come to me! I am your sustainer and god! I have made your limbs! I have designed your destiny!”

The Imam (a.s.) said, " That enemy of Allah will be a false god! He will be one-eyed monster that needs food and water for sustenance, as any other living creature! Your Allah is above all this! Most of the followers of Dajjal will be illegitimate offspring of fornicating people. These followers will wear a green cap as the headgear. Dajjal will be killed by a person whose sign would be that he would lead Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) at the congregation.. This will happen in *Uqbah Rafee,* a place in Syria, on a Friday afternoon. Then a great upheaval will follow!"

The people asked what that upheaval would be?

THE APPEARANCE OF DABAT AL ARDH

Hazrat Ali (a.s) said, " Dabat al Ard will be born near the mount of *Safa.* He will have the ring of Hazrat Suleiman (a.s.) and the Staff of Hazrat Moosa (a.s.). He will make a mark on the forehead of the *momins (*the pious) and one on the foreheads of the infidels with the Staff.The mark on the foreheads of the pious would read, 'This is Momin, verily! (*Haada mominun haqqun)*, and on the foreheads of the infidels the inscription would be, ' This is the infidel *(Haadah kaferun)'* Then Dabat al Ardh would raise his head and the people would see him. This event will take place after the sunset at the time of *Maghrib.* This will be around the time when the door for repentence will be closed!."

Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " Don't ask any more about Dajjal! It is the instruction of the Holy Prophet (a.s.) that further information must be given only to the *Ahl al Bayt."*

The narrator says, " I asked Saasah, ' Who is the person behind whom Hazrat Eesa (a.s) would join the congregation?'"

He said, " He will be the 9th Imam (a.s.) from the progeny of Imam Hussain (a.s). He will emerge from the point between the *Hajr al Aswad* and the *Muqam e Ibrahim* in Kaaba. He will establish the Rule of Law and Justice. He will free the world of the infidels. "

Many traditions suggest that the *Dabat al Ardh* would, in fact, be Hazrat Ali (a.s.). He will come after the appearance of *Saheb al Amr (a.s.)*, the Last Imam, and this will be the time very close to the Doomsday!

THE THIRD OBJECTIVE
ABOUT MEAAD-THE RESURRECTION

The meaning of *Meaad* is'returning again' or resurrection. This will be the day when Allah will bring back Jinn and Men to life after death and an account, or balancesheet of their good and bad deeds, would be drawn.

Meaad is one of the most important aspects of Faith that has been mentioned in the Traditions many times over. In fact, one who doesn't believe in *Meaad* and believe that on the Day of Judgement men will not be raised in their earthly bodies is an infidel.

Interpreting the verses of the Quran that the reward and retribution will only be for the *spirits* and the bodies would not be raised for the purpose is infidelity. One must believe that on Doomsday there will be a great upheaval. The mountains would shatter into smithereens. The dust of the bodies of the dead would be reassembled into full with Allah's Orders. The spirit would enter every individual's body and then the accounting of the deeds would take place!

The other aspects of *Qiyamat, viz, the Bridge of Sirat, Meezan* (the Balance of Justice) will follow and the deeds would be measured. According to the Promise made by Allah, evryone shall pass through all the steps to be judged deserving of the Heaven or the Hell. In the Heaven there will be *Houris, Ghilmaan, canals of sweet honey and milk, garden with fruits.* The Hell for the evil will have fire, snakes, vermin, thorny trees and boiling hot water. One MUST believe that all these are true and DEFINITE to happen to every human being and the jinns.

ABOUT THE SPIRITS OF THE *MOMINS* -THE PIOUS

One night, *Hibba e Arabi*, went with Hazrat Ali (a.s.) to to the graveyard of *Wadi as Salam* near *Al Najaf.* Hazrat Ali (a.s.) stood there as if in conversation with someone. Hibba Araby got tired standing there for long. He sat several times and got up. When he could bear the delay no further, he told to Hazrat Ali (a.s.), " You must be tired. Take some rest!"

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " I have love for the *Momins!* Let me talk with them!"

He asked, " O Amir al Momineen (a.s.)! In what conditions are they?"

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " They are sitting happily in groups!"

He asked, " Are their bodies here too! "

Hazrat Ali (a.s) replied, " No! Only the spirits are there. Wheresoever a Momin expires, his spirit comes here!"

- It is narrated that a person said to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), O Hazrat! It is said that the spirits of momins keep flying near the Firmament in the shape of green colored birds!" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " It isn't true! The spirit of a momin is not such a

trivial thing in the eys of Allah that it is transformed into a bird. It remains there in a sublime form. "

- A person told to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that his brother is in Baghdad. If he dies there, he would be very far from him! The Imam (a.s.) said, " Don'tworry! Wherever a Momin dies, in the East or the West, his spirit would come to the *Wadi as Salam!* "The man asked," Where is this valley?" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Near and behind the city of *Koofah!"*
- Abu Baseer narrates from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the Imam said, " The spirits of Momins rest under heavenly trees and talk with each other. When a new spirit arrives, the others want to leave it alone for sometime that it has passed through the hardships of leaving the earthly body. Then they ask it about some persons. When it says that the person are alive and kicking, they become happy and predict that they will join them sooner or later! When it says that someone has already died and his spirit has not come there, they all cry in unison, ' ho!ho!' meaning that he must certainly have gone to the Hell!"
- It is narrated from Abu Baseer that he inquired from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " Ya Hazrat! Where are the spirits of Momins?" The Imam (a.s.) said, " They live in rooms prvided to them in the Heaven! They eat and drink heavenly victuals! They pray to Allah to hasten the *Qiyamat,* and fulfil the promise made to them and make the living momins join their ranks.'
- It is narrated from Zarees Kanasi that he asked Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.), " It is believed that the river *Euphrates* has its source in the Heaven?!" TheImam (a.s.) replied, " Towards the West Allah has created a *Behisht*.The river Euphrates starts from there. Every evening the spirits of momins visit there, eat fruits, meet each other, in the morning do sightseeing in the space between the earth and the Heaven and then enter their individual graves and look at the people reciting the *Fateha* for them. Towards the East Allah has created the Hell where the spirits of the infidels are tortured. In the mornings they go to the *Vale of Barhoot* in Yemen. The heat in this valley is more than that in the Hell. These spirits will remain like this till the Doomsday."

ABOUT THE HORN (*SOOR)* OF ISRAFEEL

Ali bin Ibrahim narrates from Taveer bi abi Fakhta that people asked Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.), " What is the Horn of Israfeel?"

The Imam (a.s.) replied, " The Horn of Israfeel has two branches. There is so much distance between the two branches that it is equal to the distance between the earth and the sky! With the orders from Allah Israfeel will first appear at the *Baith Allah, the Kaaba.* Then the angels would know that the time for the perishing of the inhabitants of the earth and the rest of the universe has come..Israfeel would then turn towards the Kaaba *and blow his Horn. Hearing the sound from the branch of the Horn towards the*

earth, all its inhabitants would die instantly. The inhabitants towards the branch on the side of the sky too would perish hearing the sound. Then, with Allah's Orders, Israfeel too will die. The skies and the mountains would blow into smithereens and would fly around like the dust. Then Allah will create a new earth that would be devoid of sin. There wouldn't be any mountains, trees, buildings or grass on the new earth. Allah's Firmament would be standing on water. Then the Herald would proclaim, " *Lemun al malak alyoum!- Who is the monarch this day?"* Then Allah will himself announce, " *Lillahhil wahed al Qahhar-Allah ; the Ony and the Wrathful)! I have destroyed all the creation. There is no god but Me. I have no equal or partner. I created with My Absolute Power and so have I destroyed everything. I shall create again with My Own Wish!"*

" At that time the Horn will be sounded again when the inhabitants of the earth and the universe will come back to life. *Mekaeel* would then sound the *Soor.* Hearing the *Soor* the inhabitants of the earth would assemble, the angels of the Heaven and the Hell too would assemble and the entire Creation would get ready to account for the deeds they perpetrated. "

Telling this the Imam (a.s.) started crying inconsolably for sometime!.

- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that on the Doomsday Allah will tell the Angel of Death (*Malak al Maut*) : " O Malak al Maut! As you have given a taste of death to everyone I shall give you the same taste today!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that Allah will ressurect His creations again after death. The sky will be under orders to rain continuously for forty days. Then Allah will gather the particles of every living creature and put them back to shape and life as they were earlier.
- In the Commentary on the Verse " *Haada yaumu yanfaussadqeena sidquhum"* , Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says," On the Doomsday when people will be gathered for rendering account of their deeds, they will reach the place passing through very hazardous way. The hardships of the *Maidan e Mahshar (Ground of Assemblage on the Day of Resurrection)* will be extreme because people will be jostled against one another. Then a Herald will announce the Orders of Allah that everyone will hear, ' Where is Mohammed of Arabia (a.s.)? He should come forward!' The Prophet (a.s.) would then come forward. Allah will give him a station on the right side of the *Arsh (the Firmament).* Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and his Successors, the Imams (a.s), would be called and placed on the left side of the Prophet (a.s). The people of the Prophet (a.s.)'s *Ummat*(the followers) would be called and asked to station themselves to their left. Then every Prophet (a.s.) and his followers would be called and asked to arrange themselves into formations on the left side of the Firmament. Then the *Qalam* (the Pen), in the form of a human, will be stationed at *Muqam e Hisab (* the Place of Audit) in front of the Firmament. At that juncture Allah will ask the *Qalam, '* Have you recorded all that We had asked you to record on the *Lauh* (the Tablet)!' The Pen would say, ' O Sustainer! You are the *Aalam* (the Omniscient) Your secrets knows none other than You Yourself!' Allah would rejoin ' Then, you have completed the *Hujjat (the Objective)*! Then the *Lauh* (the Tablet) will come in human form.

> Allah will ask him, ‘ Whatever We had asked the *Qalam* to record, is it recorded on you ?’ *Lauh* would reply, ‘ Definitely, whatever the *Qalam* has recorded on me, I have communicated to *Israfeel.’* Then *Israfeel,* who will be present in human form, will be asked, ‘ Has *Lauh* informed you of all that has been recorded by the *Qalam* on it?’ Then *Jibrael* will come and stand in front of *Israfeel.* Allah will ask him if he has been advised by *Israfeel* of Allah’s *Wahee* (the Revelation)? *Jibrael* will affirm that whenever he received the *Wahee,* he communicated to the Prophets (a.s.) of the time. In the end he carried the Revelations to His last Messenger, Mohammed bin Abd Allah (a.s.)!

CONFIRMATION OF THE MISSION OF PROPHETHOOD

Now, from the scion of Adam (a.s.), the first to be called will be Mohammed bin Abd Allah (a.s.) for questioning. On that day, the Prophet (a.s.) will be placed at the most prominent place. Now, Allah will ask the Prophet (a.s.), “ Has *Jibrael* communicated all Our Revelations to you?” The Prophet (a.s.) will reply, “ O my Creator! Yes. *Jibrael* has communicated to me the Book, the Knowledge and the Erudition sent by You!” Allah will ask, “ Have you given my Orders and Testaments to my people?” The Prophet (a.s.) replied, “ I have communicated all Your Orders and Testaments to the people, had done *Jehad (struggle)* in your way!”Allah will then ask the Prophet (a.s.), “ Who is your Witness?” The Prophet (a.s.) will reply, “ O Allah! You are Yorself my Witness! Your angels and the selected people amongst my followers too are my witnesses! But only Your Witness is enough for me!” Then the angels would bear witness to the Prophethood of Mohammed (a.s.). Then the Prophet (a.s.)’s *Ummat* would be called upon to bear witness to his Prophethood. Every believer will bear witness that,‘Mohammed bin Abd Allah (a.s.) communicated to us Your Book and Knowledge to us!”The Prophet (a.s.) will then be asked, “ Whom did you appoint your Vicegerent to guide the *Ummat* after you?”The Vicegerent (s) who would keep the people on the Right Path and teach them about our Book?” The Prophet (a.s.) would reply, “ I have appointed the *Khair al Bashar,* the best of the *ummat,* my brother, Ali bin abi Talib (a.s.), as my vicegerent, succesor and *Caliph.* I exhorted my people to obey him after me.”Then Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) will be called for interrogation. Allah will ask him, “ O Ali (a.s.)! Mohammed bin Abdallah, Our Prophet (a.s.), appointed you his Caliph. Did you discharge the duties of *Imamat* of the people after him?” Hazrat Ali (a.s.) would say, “ O Creator, Allah! Your Prophet (a.s.) nominated me his Caliph! When You called away Your Habib, the Prophet (a.s), from the world, his *Ummat* recanted from my *Khilafat and Imamat* and weakened me with stealth and strategem. They conspired to assasinate me, did not heed my advice and gave preference to the incompetent over me and imposed them as *caliph and imam,* one after another! Then I took to the sword, did *Jehad* in Your way and Iwas Martyred!” Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) will be asked, “ Whom did you appoint as you *Naib* (Successor)?”Thus, every Imam (a.s.) would be called for interrogation along with the people of his own time. Allah will then say:

“ Haada yaumu yanfahus saadiqeena sidquhum – Today the Truthful would get benefit for their truthfulness.”

- Reliable sources narrate from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that when Allah will gather the people for interrogation, He will ask Hazrat Nooh (a.s.), the Prophet, about the discharge of his duties of Prophethood. Hazrat Nooh (a.s.) will say, “ O Allah! I implicitly conveyed your Testament to the people!” Allah will ask him, “ Who will be your witness?” Hazrat Nooh (a.s.) will reply, “ Hazrat Mohammed bin Abd Allah (a.s) will be my witness!”Saying this, Hazrat Nooh (a.s.) will come near to the Prophet, Mohammed (a.s.), and will say, “ O Mohammed (a.s.)! Allah has demanded a witness about my discharge of duties as His Prophet!” The Prophet (a.s.) will call Hazrat Hamza and Hazrat Jafffer at that point and tell them to give witness to Allah about Propagation of Allah’s Word to his people by the Prophet Noah (a.s.). Then these two Companions of the Prophet (a.s) bear witness for Hazrat Nooh (a.s.) and other Prophets (a.s). The Narrator says, “ I asked the Imam (a.s.), why the Prophet (a.s.) will not send Hazrat Ali (a.s.) for this purpose?” The Imam (a.s.) said, “ It was because of Hazrat Ali (a.s.)’s superior status!”
- It is narrated that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ Before you are asked to present the account of your deeds by Allah, you must do your own audit! Because on the Day of Judgement people will be made to wait at fifty places for giving account of their deeds and at every stage one will have to linger for a thousand years, as Allah Himself says”

Kaana miqdaruhukhamseena alfa sanatin- The Day will be such that its strech will be of fifty thousand years!”

ABOUT THE MAIDAN-E-HASHR: THE PLACE OF RESURRECTION

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that when the Verse:

“ Wa jeyaea yaumezein bejahannum”,
was revealed, the companions asked the Prophet (a.s.) it’s meaning. The Prophet (a.s.) said, “ Jibrael has told me that on the Doomsday Allah will order the people to be assembled for interrogation. He will also order the *Jehannum,* The Hell, to be there too. The *Jehannum* will have a thousand nose-strings, each in the hands of one angel. The *Jehannum* would angrily attempt to attack the infidels and the sinners. It would produce such a sound that if Allah chose not to intervene, everyone would perish! Then flames

would rise forth from the *Jehannum* and the oppressive heat will be felt by the gathering, and the prophets (a.s.) too would become uncomfortable. At that time everyone would cry,*" Nafsi, nafsi!* that is, they would plead with Allah to be kind on them and prevent them from the torture! The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) will then call, " *Ummati, Ummati!"* and the *Pul e Sirat,* the Bridge of Sirat, would be brought. The path of this bridge will be sharper than the sword and thinner than the hair, The *Sirat* will have three bridges. One will be the bridge of *Sila e Rahm* or kindness towards ones relatives..On this bridge those will not be allowed to pass who had deprived the rights of their relations. Some others will be stopped from crossing the bridge by *Namaz* (the Mandatory Prayers) as a penalty for not regularly offering these prayers. Another group will be denied entry to the *Sirat* for not giving the rights of the people, the *Huqooq al Ebad!* Therefore Allah says:

Inna Rabbaka labil mirsad- and passing through the Bridge of Sirat Allah will question you."

ABOUT THE BRIDGE OF SIRAT

The pious person will go across the Bridge of Sirat without any difficulty whatsoever. Some others will be hanging on the sides of the bridge. The feet of some people will falter and others will hang on to one another to avoid falling down from the Bridge.They will all be praying to Allah to Help them safely cross the Bridge. They will plead Him to Pardon their faults and misdeeds!

Those who get across the Bridge safely, they will say, " We are thankful to Allah! He had been kind in giving us help." They were otherwise losing all hope of successfully negotiating across the Bridge!"

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq said, " The Bridge of Sirat is sharper than the sword and thinner than the hair! Some will go across it at the speed of lightning! Some will go at a trot like the horse, some like the men on foot and there will be others who will falter like a baby learning to walk! Some will go precariously hanging on the Bridge feeling the heat of the Hellfire on one side. "
- Hazrat Ali says, " When a person is made to stand at the station for accounting of the deeds, Allah will tell, " Strike a balance between My Bounties and the person's actions!"

  When the angels strike the balance and they find the actions commensurate or more than the Kindness endowed on him, then Allah will say, ' I have gifted to him the Blessings enjoyed by the person. Now, make a balance between his good deeds and bad ones! If the good deeds and bad deeds are found equal to one other, even then the person will be permitted entry to the Heaven! If the persons good deeds measure more than his bad deeds, he will be endowed with more Blessings in the Heaven. If the person's bad deeds are more than the good deeds, he will get Allah's pardon provided he was not an infidel or hypocrite!

- Imam Mohammed Baqir was asked by someone, “ What is the meaning of the Verse of the Holy Quran that says,’ The sins of that group of people will be swapped by Allah with good deeds, and Allah is Forgiving , Merciful.’ “
  The Imam said, A momin who has sinned during his life would be called for rendering account of his deeds on the Day of Judgement. When the person will confess of his mistakes in front of Allah, Allah, in His Kindness, will order the angels to erase the person’s sins from his *nama e aamal* or the inventory of his acts good and bad. He will ask the angels to enter good deeds in favour of the person for the bad ones deleted from the list. When the people of the *Day of Resurrection* look at the statement of the person’s deeds, they may wonder that he has not committed any misdeeds in his life! Then Allah will order the person to be admitted to the Heaven. The Imam said, “ This verse is specially for our Shias!”

THE ACCOUNTING OF DEEDS ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says,“ Two persons, on The Day of Judgement, will be such that one of them was rich and the other lived in absolute penury. The person who lived in poverty would say, ‘ O Allah! Why did you make me to stand here for accounting! I spent my life in abject poverty! I have nothing to account for whatsoever! I had no wealth that would make me deprive anyone of his rights or to be unkind to anyone! From You I received just enough for my sustenance!”

Allah will say, “ The man is right! Take him to the Heaven and keep the rich person in the Grounds of Resurrection (*Maidan e Mahshar*) so long for accounting that with his sweat , in the extreme heat of the place, forty camels are able to quench their thirst! The man should be directed to the Heaven after he gives the account of the use of his wealth during his life!”When he entered the Heaven, his poor companion will ask him about the delay in his arrival there. The man will tell him that he was accounting for the wealth and riches he had possessed in the world! “

Then the rich person will ask the poor man who he was.. He will say that he is the same person who was standing with him on the Day of Accounting. The good life in the Heaven had changed him so much that the other person was not able to recognize him.”

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that when Allah will order people to be assembled for accounting on the Day of Resurrection, each person will have his *Nama e Aamal* in his hand. Some hypocrites will complain that those were not their own *Nama e Aamal* that were in their hands. At that moment the *Karamain Katibain* (The writers of the Deeds) will bear witness that the *Nama e Aamal were definitely of those persons who had them in their hands.* Then they will tell to Allah, “ O Allah! They are your angels and, to please you, they are bearing witness against us!” Then they will take anoath that the *Nama e Aamal* were not theirs. Allah tells about this in the Holy Quran thus:

“ *Yauma yabasuhum Allaho jamian fayahlefoona lahu kama yahlefoona lakum- That day Allah will bring forth everyone, they will take oaths like they used to take false oaths”*

The Imam (a.s.) said, “ These are the people who had usurped the rights of Ameer al Momineen (a.s.). At that time Allah will put seal on their lips. Their senses will bear witness. Their ears would say, ‘ O Allah! They used us for hearing wrong things!’ Their eyes would say, ‘ They used us for seeing taboo (*Haram)* things.’ Thus, every sense of the persons will bear witness to their deeds Then Allah will order the seal to be taken off their tongues. Then the tongues would say to the senses, ‘ Why did you bear witness against us?’ The senses would reply, ‘ The Allah who gave everyone the faculty of speech, gave us courage to speak the truth!’”

ABOUT INTERCESSION

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that on the Day of Resurrection, all the creations, in naked condition, will be assembled at the *Maidan e Hashr*. They will be made to stay there by Allah in extreme heat and discomfort for so long that they would sweat profusely and become impatient. Then Allah’s Herald will call, “ Where is the Last Prophet, Mohgammed bin Abd Allah (a.s.)?” At that moment the Prophet (a.s.) would come forward and stand near the *Cistern of Kauthar.* The length of the Cistern is about the same as the distance between the hamlet of *Eela* in Syria and *Sanaa* in Yemen.

Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) will come and stand on the side of the Prophet (a.s.). He will quench his friends’ thirst from the same cistern. Some persons will be asked by the angels to keep away from the cistern. They will prevent them from drinking the water. At that time the Prophet (a.s.) will submit to Allah, “ O Allah! These people are the friends of my *Ahl al Bayt!* Why are they prevented from partaking of the water? O Allah! Pardon them with Your Munificence!”

The sound will come, “ O Mohammed (a.s.)! We have accepted your recommendation and pardoned them! They are permitted to drink the *Water of Kauthar.*
Then the Imam (a.s.) said, “ At that time lots of people will cry over their misfortune, while our Shias will get Pardon of their sins by Allah on account of their love for us!”

ABOUT THE CISTERN OF KAUTHAR

Abu Turab Ansari narrates that someone asked the Prophet (a.s.) about the *Cistern of Kauthar.* The Prophet (a.s.) said:

“ It is a cistern that Allah has gifted to me. This is one of the privileges that make me superior to the other prophets (a.s.). The length of the cistern is almost the distance from the Hamlet of Eela to Sanaa. The goblets placed on its banks for drinking the water are like the stars in the sky. Two big canals from *Arsh* replenish its water. The water of the cistern is sweeter than honey and whiter than milk. Its soil smells better than musk. The pebbles on its banks are of rubies and emerald. Its grass is saffron. Allah has promised to me that only those persons will get to drink this water whose hearts are free of hypocrisy and polytheism. They should also have clear conscience and be the followers of my Vicegerent, Ali (a.s.), to be eligible for using the water of the cistern. The enemies of Ali (a.s.) will be sent away from the cistern.the way a camel with scabies is removed from its flock. Whoever drinks the water of *Kauthar* once , his thirst will be quenched for ever.

There are several traditions of the Prophet (a.s.) that one who believes in Allah and knows that the Day of Judgement is a certainty shall also have to believe in the existence of the *Cistern.* Otherwise, on the Day of Judgement he will not be quenched with *Kauthar's water.* The Prophet (a.s.) also said, “ One who doesn't believe in our intercession, we shall not be able to intercede on his behalf on the Day of Resurrection. My intercession will be required only for those who will carry heavy load of sins. The pious and the virtuous would not need intercession!”

- Reliable sources narrate from Imam Jafar e Safiq (a.s.) that the Doomsday will be so tough for the people that the sweat would flow into their mouths. They will talk to each other and then go to Hazrat Adam (a.s.) to ask him to intercede on their behalf for relief from the extreme conditions of heat. Hazrat Adam (a.s.) will express his inability and refer them to Hazrat Nooh (a.s.) who, in turn, will send them to the other prophets (a.s.). Thus they will go to Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) and he will direct them to Hazrat Mohammed bin Abd Allah (a.s.) in the end. The Prophet (a.s.) will then say, “ Come with me! I shall recommend you to Allah!” The Prophet (a.s.) would take them to the gate of the Heaven. After prostrating to Allah he will pray to Him to relieve the hardship of those persons. Then the sound will come, “ O Mohammed (a.s.)! We have accepted your intercession!” This is the interpretation of the Verse of the Holy Quran:

. . . ‘ *Asa ainyabasaka Rabbuka maqaman mahmooda-be hopeful that your Allah will*
. . *send you to your preferred Muqam e Mahmood.”*

- It is said that a person came to Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) and said, “ O Imam (a.s.)! When you talk of intercession, you make people, your followers, proud!” The Imam (a.s.) said, “ Do you think that you can contorl your carnal desire to sin during your life and that you will not need the intercession of our Ancestor (a.s.), The Prophet Mohammed (a.s.) on the Day of Judgement. By Allah! If you witness the hardships of the Doomsday, you will certainly crave for the intercession. The Prophet (a.s.)'s Intercession will be needed only by those who were sinners in their lives.”

SHIAS GO TO HEAVEN

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) will intercede on behalf of his *Umma,* the following. The Imams (a.s.) too will recommed for the deliverence of their followers, the Shias. Some *Momins,* pious persons too, will take the cause of their friends for pardon. The number of such persons will be equal to the combined population of *Rabeah and Mudar.* Some momin will only vouch for the one who served him in his life.

- The Prophet (a.s.) said that, " three types of people will try to intercede on behalf of their friends on the Day of Judgement. Firstly, the Prophets (a.s.), then the *Ulema* (the learned scholars) and thirdly, the *Shohada* (the martyrs).
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked the Prophet (a.s.) about the Verse of the Holy Quran " *Yauma nahsharul muttaqeena ilar Rahmane wafada- That day We shall resurrect the pious (muttaqi) persons in a group in the Presence of the merciful Allah."* The Prophet (a.s.) said, " O Ali (a.s.)! This group was abstinent in the world and therefore is dear to Allah. Allah praised their actions and gave them the title of *Muttaqi*—the pious! O Ali (a.s.)! By Allah, these persons will rise from their graves on the Day of Resurrection, in a way that their faces will be shining white like the snow, they will be in shining raiment and wearing golden footwear studded with pearls. The angels will fetch carriages for them to travel through *Mahshar,* the Place of Judgement.With every carriage there will be a thousand angels. They will bring them very respectfully to the gate of the Heaven. Near the gate there will be a tree. Under each leaf of that tree one hundred thousand persons can take shelter. To the right of the tree will be a sweet water lake from which the persons will quench their thirst. The water has a special quality of removing the feelings of anger and jealousy from the nature of a person and the superfluous hair will fall from the body of the person who drinks it. Therefore, Allah says in the Holy Book, "*Wasaqahum Rabbuhum sharaban tahoora.- And Allah wil make them drink a pure beverage that will wipe away their outward and latent defects."* Then they will reach another lake that is on the left side of the tree. The lake is called *Chashma e Hayat- the Lake of Life.* The persons will take a bath in the lake. The water of this lake has a special effect that it makes the bather immortal. They will be forever free from any pain or ailment. Then Allah will order His angels to admit the persons to the Heaven. When the angels bring them to the gate of the Heaven, then the houris specially created by Allah for them will receive them and will welcome the new arrivals. The consorts of these people and the other inmates of the Heaven will then say, " Welcome! We were eagerly awaiting your arrival!" The new arrivals too will greet their friends in the Heaven." When the Prophet (a.s.) reached this point, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked, " Who these people are?" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " This is the group of Shias of whom you are the Imam!"
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said, " On the Day of Judgement a herald will announce, ' Where are the people who

are patient and forebearing?' At that time one group would come forward. The angels will ask them respectfully, " How did you practice forbearance?" They will reply, " We kept ourselves away from disobedience of Allah and kept our conscience free of sinful thoughts." Then a voice will come, ' They are telling the truth! Without taking any account of their deeds, they may be admitted to the Heaven!' then another herald woud cry, ' Who are people of *fazl (excellence)* ?' Another group would come forward and the angels will receive them with respect. And ask them, ' What is the excellence in you that you have achieved this position?' They will say, ' The enemies of Allah used to torture us, to heap insults and indignities on us. We bore all that with equanimity and always prayed for their reform!' Then a voice will come, ' These are truthful persons! Admit them to the Heaven!' Then the herald will call, ' Where are the *Humsaye, the neighbors?'* Then another group of people would come forward. The angels will ask them, ' What good deed you have done to earn the privilege of being termed the neighbors of Allah?' They will reply, ' In the world we strived hard to keep good relations with our pious neighbor to please Allah. We treated them like brothers and went to help them in times of need!' A voice said, ' These are truthful persons! Admit them to the Heaven!' Then the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) added, ' These persons will be the neighbors of the prophets and the Vicegerents (a.s.). Other people will be subject to the hardships of the Day of Judgement, but these will not have any fear. All others will be required for their deeds in the world, but this group would be admitted into the Heaven without undergoing the accounting process!"

LAVA E HAMD- THE STANDARD

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that on the Day of Judgement the Divine favor of Allah will be of such intensity that even the Satan will wish to be a recepient of it.

- Reliable sources narrate from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.), " O Ali (a.s.)! You will be the first to enter the Heaven. You will have the *Lava e Hamd,* the Standard, in your hand. This standard will consist of a thousand flags. Each flag will be larger than the sun and the moon.
- One narration is that the Prophet (a.s.) said to Hazrat Ali (a.s.), " O Ali (a.s.)! You will be the first to be summoned on the Day of Judgement. You will be given the *Lava e Hamd.* All the people on the *Day of Resurrection* will line up on both sides. You will pass through the middle of these rows with the Standard. The staff of the standard will be of silver and the top will be of red rubies. The length of the flag will be equal to the distance that can be traversed in one thousand years. Hazrat Adam (a.s.) and all the other prophets (a.s.) will be under this flag. It will have three flanks, one to the East, the second to the West and the third covering all the worlds. .They will have three lines written on them. The first will be,' *Bism Illah ar Rahman ir Rahim', the second, ' Alhamdu Lillahi Rabil aalamin' and the third, ' La ilaha il Allah Mohammedan Rasool Allah'.* Every line will be

equal to the distance traversed in a thousand years. The width too will be of the same dimension. O Ali (a.s.)! You will be my Standard Bearer! Imam Hassan (a.s.) will be on your right and Imam Hussain (a.s.) will be on the left. You will thus reach me in the shade of the *Arsh* (the Empyrean Throne of Allah).A garment from the Heaven will be provided to you to wear. At that time the herald would announce,' Your father, Ibrahim (a.s.) is an exemplry father and your brother Ali (a.s.), too is the best of brothers!'"

- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " When you pray (ask for boons), do it through my *Wasila* (mediation)! The people asked, " What is the *Wasila?*" The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " Allah has earmarked a position for me in the Heaven. That is called the *Wasila.* It has four stages. Each stage is equivalent to the distance that can be traversed in a thousand years on the back of a fast steed. One of the stages is topaz, one ruby, another of pearls and the fourth of gold and silver. On the Day of Judgement the Stages of my *Wasila*, along with those of the other Prophets (a.s.) will be brought. My *Wasila* will radiate then like the moon. All the Prophets (a.s.) will say that the one who has such shining stages of his *Wasila* is very fortunate! At that time the herald would announce, " This Stage is that of Mohammed bin Abd Allah (a.s.)!".I shall reach there in raiment of light, with a crown on my head! Ali (a.s.) will be in my front carrying *Lava al Hamd.*The standard will have inscribed on it,' *la ilaha IlAllaho Mohammedun Rasool Allahil muflehoona humul fayezoon."* I shall be one Stage (*Darja*) above that on which Ali (a.s.) will be stationed. All the Privileged Persons of Allah will say,' How superior are these two persons!' A sound will come,' They are My *Habib (Friend),* Mohammed (a.s.) and *Wali (the Vicegerent),* Ali ibne Abi Talib (a.s.). Fortunate are those who are their friends and accursed are their enemies!'" . ..

HAZRAT ALI'S AUTHORITY

The prophet (a.s.) will tell to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) at this juncture, " Hearing this announcement your friends will be besides themselves with joy and your enemies, who usurped your rights, will be shivering in fear. The faces of the enemies will turn black in mortification. Then two angels, *Ridwan,* the Keeper of the Heaven and *Malik,* the chief of the Hell will approach and greet me. I will ask them, who they were. *Ridwan* would say, ' O Hazrat (a.s.)! I am the Keeper of the Heaven and have come to give you the key to the Gate of the Heaven.'. Taking the key I will thank Allah for giving me the privilege.Then the Keeeper of the Hell, *Malik,* would greet me and introduce himself to me thus, ' I am the Keeper of the Hell and have come to you to handover its key to you.' Taking the key, I will again thank Allah for the privilege bestowed on me.

Then I will hand over the keys to you and you will stand near the wall of the Hell. The nose-rope of the Hell will be in your hand. Hell will complain to you that with your *Noor* (the light) its fire was getting cold. You will then say, ' O Hell! Take care! Beware of taking in our friends! Admit our foes into your precincts and punish them!'".

Then the Prophet (a.s.) said, " By Allah! On that day, the Hell would be more submissive to Ali (a.s.) than your slaves are submissive to you now!"

It is imperative on every Muslim that he believes that one day, with Allah's Orders, the eartth, the sky, the mountains and everything thereon will perish..The dead would then resurrect and be assembled for giving account of their deeds.

The *Fishar e Qabr (*The Pressure of the Grave), the Questioning by *Munkir and Nakeer* will all take place when the dead are resurrected. Thereafter the spirits of the pious would be transferred to exemplary bodies and will be sent to the worldly Heaven and sometimes they will go to *Wadi as Salam* located in the wilderness near *Najaf.* When people visit their graves, they would know about it. The spirits of the infidels and hypocrites will be madecaptive in exemplary bodies and subjected to hardship. They will be sent to the Valley of *Barhoot* where they will suffer till the Day of Judgement. This, for all the dead, is the period of *Barzaq,* or Interregnum prior to the final Day of Judgement.About *Barzaq,* more later..

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) says, " O Abu Dharr! On the Doomsday, the worst person in the view of Allah will be one who has neither derived benefit from his knowledge nor has he transmitted it to others. Therefore, one who pursues search for knowledge just to awe others and to be recognized as their superior, would not even get to smell the fragrance of the Heaven!

O AbuDharr! If people ask you of a thing you don't know, own your ignorance frankly. Because, otherwise you may be subject to Allah's wrath on the Day of Jufgement!"

O Abu Dharr! The inmates of the Heaven will ask the inmates of Hell, ' What has brought you to the Hell; though your own disciples are in the Heaven!' They will say, ' We preached about being virtuous but in practice we ourselves were not virtuous."

The next chapter deals with some rules and regulations

CHAPTER: 7
THE MAXIMS OR REGULATIONS

THE FIRST MAXIM: THE SUPERIORITY OF KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge or scholarship is one of the felicitous excellences. Over all the beings, the humans have ascendance because of their superiority in knowledge. Therefore, the Prophet (a.s.), who is credited with the title of the City of Knowledge (*Madinat al Ilm)*, says:

"It is mandatory on every Muslim, man and woman, to acquire knowledge because Allah considers such people His friends."

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says:

" Acquiring knowledge and putting it to good use is essential".

Knowledge is better than all the riches because it guards itself. To the contrary riches have to be guarded against burglars and brigands. There is another reason for search of knowledge that knowledge takes care of itself and its possessor and riches are kept in Allah's Care. Allah has Promised provision of means of sustenance to every living creature, but acquiring knowledge is absolutely one's own prerogative. Allah has not promised endowing knowledge to every human being. It is therefore necessary that people seek knowledge from the possessors of knowledge.

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says," One who seeks knowledge from the learned in Religion, will get reward equivalent to that of seventy thousand persons of piety!"
- Hazrat Fatima (a.s.) says, " My father told me that Allah will provide the raiment from the Heaven to the Shia scholars on the Day of Resurrection as a reward for imparting knowledge to the orphans, acting as their guardians and guides in the absence (*Ghaibat)* of the Imam (a.s.) of the time. These scholars take care of the

children because they are aware that the Imam (a.s.) would bestow more attention to the young seekers of knowledge than their own parents would.

- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " Knowledge is a virtue. Acquiring knowledge is devotion. Spreading knowledge through word of mouth has reward equivalent to recitation of *Tasbeeh* (saying *Subhan Allah* on the beads of a rosary). Knowledge is a friend at the times of trouble, is a companion while one is away from home (*in ghurba).* Knowledge is a guide to a person during times good and bad. It is the source of strength during old age and bestows elevated status to the person in the world and the Hereafter!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, " When Allah draws a balancesheet of deeds, then a drop of the scholars' quill's ink will be weightier and more valuable than the blood of the martyrs."

THE SCHOLARS AND THE SUPERIORITY OF LEARNING

Muawiah bin Ammar narrates that he asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " Who is the better of two persons, one who disseminates your traditions and exhortations or the one who keeps himself busy in prayer day and night?

The Imam (a.s.) replied, " The one who disseminates our traditions is the better of the two. He is better than a thousand pious persons." Then the Imam (a.s.) added, " Live in the world like a Scholar of the Faith (*Aalim e Deen)* and as a seeker of knowledge
(*Talib e Ilm)* or as a friend of the possessors of knowledge."

- It is narrated that the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " One who stirs out of his home in search of knowledge, Allah opens the doors of the Heaven for him and the angels spread their wings in his path and pray for his Deliverance (*Maghfirat)*! Not only the angels, but also all the creatures, including the schools of fishes in the oceans, pray for him. The status of (*Aalim)* in comparison with the pious (*Abid)* is like the moon amongst the stars. The scholars are the inheritors of the prophets (a.s.). The inheritance of the prophets (a.s.) is not wealth and riches. Their inheritance is knowledge and erudition. One who acquires these is the true inheritor (*Waris)* of the prophets (a.s.)."
- Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.) says, " The most pitiable condition amongst our people is that of the orphans who are away from their Imam (a.s.) and in confusion about the matters of religious jurisprudence (*Masail e Sharaiah).* The responsibility of their guidance is on our *Shia* scholars. If they impart knowledge on the matters of religion to the people then, on the Day of Judgement, they will be in the company of the Prophet and his Vicegerents (a.s.). The Imam (a.s.) added, " My ancestor has narrated that the Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) said, ' Those amongst our *Shias* who are scholars and spread their learning to others and dispel their ignorance, shall have crowns of light on their heads and wear the

raiment from Heaven on the Day of Judgement. The value of these will be much greater than all the riches of the world. A herald would say at that time,' O people! This is one of the scholars from the disciples of the Scion of Mohammed (a.s.)! The learning has given the august status to him. The light of knowledge qualifies him to enter the Heaven!'"

REWARDS FOR THE SEEKER OF KNOWLEDGE

Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.) said, " The Shia scholar who endeavors to impart knowledge to the uninformed, it will be like feeding the hungry and the thirsty! In fact it has more rewards than for one who feeds and clothes the orphans. Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " Whoever propagates the tenets of Islam in our absence, Allah says about him, ' O My creature! You have educated the people about My True Faith! I am more Generous and Munificent than you! Therefore, the number of alphabets you have used in imparting education to people, I shall reward to you a thousand palaces for each alphabet and every palace shall have thousands of bounties for you!'"

- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) says, " Allah has revealed to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.), ' Teach My creatures to be My friends!' He asked, ' O Allah! How can I do it?' Allah said,' Remind them of Our Bounties! Even if one of the misguided comes to the Right Path, you will get Reward equal to the prayers offered during the period of one hundred years when you had fasted during the days and stood praying the whole nights!' Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) asked,' Who are your misguided creatures who have to be brought to the right path?' Allah replied,' the people who are ignorant of My Jurisprudence and the method of offering prayers.'"
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said," Our Shia scholars will get great rewards and Deliverance on the Day of Judgement."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said," the learned person amongst the ignorant is like a light in the darkness that shows the way to the way- farers that they keep praying and receive guidance from the light. The scholar guides the ignorant and releases him from the hell of ignorance. For this act the scholar gets the reward equivalent to a thousand prayers (*rakat*)."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said," Our scholars are the keepers of the borders towards which are located the Satan and his troops. This means that the scholars protect the believers from the attack of the Satan." Then the Imam (a.s.) said," those of our Shia who are following the profession of scholarship are a thousand

times better than those who did *Jehad* in Turkey and Rome. The reason for this is that the learned protect the Shias."

- Imam Moosi Kazim (a.s.) said," the person who saves the ignorant Shias is the scholar of Jurisprudence. The scholar is more dominant on the Satan than a thousand persons of piety. Because a pious person tries only for his own deliverance while a scholar guides lots of people against the machinations of the Satan. On the Day of Judgement a herald would cry,'O guide of the orphans! You were taking responsibility of giving guidance to them in the absence of the Imam (a.s.)! Intercede on behalf of those who took guidance from you! Then he will accordingly intercede. On his recommendation hundreds of thousands of his disciples and the disciples of his disciples will receive Deliverance."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said," during the absence of the Last Imam (a.s.), the scholars will have the responsibility of explaining about the Imamat and protecting the Shias from the treachery of the Satans amongst the men. If these scholars were not there, the Shias could have gone astray. The nosestring of the Shias is in the hands of the scholars, as the sailor would hold the sail of a craft. Therefore the status of the scholars in the eyes of Allah is very superior.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," religious dicourse is like the lamp under a rosary. It is a friend in the loneliness of the grave. The religious scholar is like a sharp sword against the enemies. The Angels are the friends of the scholars and they keep praising them in their prayers.

THE SECOND MAXIM: THE TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE

Every seeker of knowledge should try to acquire learning that is of perpetual and eternal value. His knowledge should be to please his Lord, Allah. One should remember that every type of knowledge does not have the approval of the Creator. If a person seeks knowledge about astrology or sorcery, he will definitely invite the wrath of Allah. Such persons will be judged as those who have strayed from the right path.

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " There are only three types of knowledge:

1. Learning the apparent meanings of the Holy Quran.
2. Learning about the mandatory practices that Allah, in His Justice, has prescribed for the humankind.
3. The orders of the *Sunnat,* the Holy Prophet (a.s.)'s Religious Rites Ordained by him.

All else is futile.

THE SYMBOLS OF A SCHOLAR

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that Hazrat Luqman (a.s.) said to his son that there are three symbols by which a scholar is identified:

The first symbol is that a scholar has knowledge of Allah, the Almighty.

The second symbol is that his actions are commensurate with what Allah expects of him.

The third symbol is that he is totally aware of the actions that are against the wish of Allah and abstains from them.

- One person came to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) and said, " O Imam (a.s.)! My son wishes to know from you about matters *Halal* (lawful) and *Haram* (prohibited). He will not pose to you any questions that are not beneficial to him." The Imam (a.s.) said, " Do any people ask anything that is better than the information about *Halal* and *Haram?*

The most beneficial is the knowledge that has the approval of Allah and the Deliverance of the person will depend on putting it into practice. That type of knowledge reaches us through the medium of the Quran, the Hadith and the Immaculate Imams of the Prophet (a.s.)'s Family. It is also essential to acquire knowledge that will give us the understanding of the Quran, Hadith and the Traditions of the Prophet (a.s.) and His Holy Family.

Therefore it is essential to strive to acquire only this knowledge, as a religious and moral duty. This will be a vehicle for Deliverance in the Hereafter.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.)said that Hazrat Luqman (a.s.) told to his son that there are three characteristics of a scholar, by which he is recognized:

1. The scholar has an understanding of Allah, the Creator.
2 2. The scholar knows about the things that have the Pleasure of Allah.
3. The scholar is also aware of what displeases Allah.

The Imam (a.s.) also said that the types of learning that are of benefit are:

1. Understanding Allah.
2. Understanding Allah's Bounties.
3. Understanding the need to abide by Allah's Wish.
4. Understanding the taboo things, the things that create a schism between the man and his Faith.

THE THIRD MAXIM: THE NORMS OF KNOWLEDGE & ACTION

The best learning and action are with the aim of earning Allah's Pleasure. As much as there is a sincere effort to acquire and act on the right knowledge, there will also be the satanic diversions to distract the person from the right path. Therefore one must pray to Allah for keeping him steadfast on the righteous path.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says," A person who acquires knowledge of the Traditions (*Ilm e Hadith)* for worldly benefits, on the Day of Judgement he would not get any reward for his efforts. But a person who is striving in the field for the Benefit in the Hereafter, he will get ample rewards in both the worlds!"

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says, " A person who acquires knowledge for self aggrandizement, makes a place for himself in the Hell. A scholar is one whose heart is free of envy, jealousy, pride and conceit of any kind. He prays to Allah with humility to expand his vision. When the heart is free of the love for worldly gains, the heart will become the fulcrum of Allah's favours.

Their knowledge and erudition are compared with a seed that is sown in the soil that sprouts, grows and becomes productive. If a seed is put on a stone or on a barren piece of land, it fails to sprout or grow. Similarly knowledge and erudition and learning are ineffective on a heart that is as hard and insensitive as a stone.

Knowledge is the heart of life. As long as there are harmful elements in the body of a man, nutritious food doesn't do much good to him. In fact, whatever food he takes, adds to his problems of digestion and other body sustaining systems. Therefore it is essential to first try to eliminate the harmful matter from the body and then provide nutrition to the man. Similarly the spiritual treatment of a person requires elimination of the spiritual ailments from the person's psyche and then initiate to knowledge and learning.

EXAMPLE OF RELIGIOUS LEARNING

It is a maxim from Hazrat Ali (a.a.) that " the hearts of the pious are wrapped in the Faith (*Eemaan)*. When Allah wishes to brighten them, He opens the wrapping and sows the seed of learning in them." Knowledge and erudition are said to be with the heart, the same way as the energy giving food is for the body. Similarly the spirit gets sustenance from the words of wisdom. Therefore, in the Holy Quran, there is mention at several places that Allah considers the infidels and morons as dead persons. For example, the Book says," *Amwaatun ghairu ahyain wa ma yashuroon- they (the infidels) are dead, not living, but they have no knowledge of this."*

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says, " Nourish your spirits by talking of word of wisdom, lest they become tired, inactive and dull. The same way the body gets fatigued."

There are many traditions that suggest that learning is life and strength for the heart. But, till the time that the spirit is not made free of the bad traits like jealousy and envy, learning will not be of any use. These bad traits must be eliminated. It is common medical practice that the physician does not prescribe tonics for the patients before getting rid of the ailment from the body. Similarly those who are suffering from spiritual ailments like envy, jealousy and greed might go astray if they acquire learning without eliminating these traits from their psyche.

Knowledge and learning is also compared with a lamp that gives light. As a blind person cannot derive any benefit from the light of a lamp, similarly a person whose heart is blind will not be benefited from the light of learning, howsoever much he acquires it! Allah says at another place in the Quran about the infidels, " *The eyes on their foreheads have light in them but the eyes of their hearts inside their chests are blind"*

At this stage it would be in place to dwell on the meaning and the purpose of the heart in the body.

ABOUT THE HEART AND THE FAITH

There are two meanings for the heart:

1. The conical shaped organ of flesh inside the chest on the left side.
2. A human being's psyche with the faculty of thinking.

The human life is directly related to the spirit. The spirit is the palpitation that is caused by the circulation of the blood. The heart is the reservoir of the blood. The blood, during its circulation reaches the brain and then to the veins of the brain, and then to the entire network of the veins in the body. The human body is the instrument for the development and progress of the psyche of a person. This psyche, in common parlance, is called the heart. Therefore, in the Holy Quran, at several places the word heart has been used in place of the psyche. The psyche will have marked effect, good or bad, on the nature of the person. . A river with plenty of water will have many tributaries. Similarly, if from the heart emanate the tributaries of instinct of faith, then the entire body will manifest the effects of virtue and piety. These tributaries from the heart are set afloat by Allah's Orders, but it is the prerogative of the man to curb the tributaries of evil and promote those of noble instinct.

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) says,

" There is a piece of flesh inside the body of the man. If that is clean, the entire body will be clean. If that is defective and unclean, then the entire body will be defective. This piece of flesh is called the heart.""

It is narrated that the Prophet (a.s.) also said:

“ If the heart is pure, the entire body will also be pure. If the heart has wickedness, the nature of the person too will be depraved.”

Hazrat Ali(a.s.)says:

“ The biggest calamity for the body is the ailing heart in the body.” He has also said that a big bounty is opulence for a human being, but one bigger than this is a healthy body and above everything else is the piety of the heart.

.Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that the heart of a person is like a ‘Imam’ or ‘leader’ for him. It controls all the other parts of the body. They understand its wishes and implicitly act on its command. Similarly the *Imam (a.s.)* is like the heart of the community or the country and the people are the parts of the body that have to act on the commands of the heart.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that the heart is of three types. There is a heart that has no place for any good deeds. Then there is the heart that has good and bad instincts in some proportion. Sometimes good instincts dominate and at other bad instincts are dominant. The third type of heart is called ‘the large heart’. In this heart the lamp of light is kindled and will remain lighted till the end. This is the heart of a pious *Momin.*

Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) says:

“ A human being has four eyes! The two eyes in the head that are used for seeing the things in the surroundings. There are another two eyes that are in the heart of a person. With the eyes of the heart the person sees his preparation for the Hereafter. He learns about his personal failings through these eyes of the heart and curbs them. This person is a pious *Momin.* There is a marked difference between a *Muslim* and a *Momin.”*

THE HEART EXPLAINED

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, “ The heart has two ears. Through one of the ears the thoughts of piety, virtue and uprightness are heard. Through the other ear the person hears the satanic talks of evil instincts. Whichever of the two dominates, manifests in the behavior of a person.”
- Also the Imam (a.s.) said that his father has said,” There is nothing that can spoil the heart than the instinct of sin. Until this instinct dominates the heart, the person will not commit sins.”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says,” Allah sent a Revelation to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.):’ O Moosa (a.s.)! Never forget to talk about Me. If you do forget, then your heart will become hard.”

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says, " The tears of the eyes will not dry till the heart hardens, and the hardness of the heart is the fore-runner of sin!"
- It has come in several traditions that every part of the body of a person who does good deeds has the instinct of faith. The actions of these parts of the body are always in accordance to the dictates of Allah.
- It has been mentioned in the traditions that when a pious person commits a major sin, the Faith departs from him!
- Imam Reza (a.s.) says, " Faith *(Eemaan)* means professing through the tongue, understanding it through the heart and manifesting it through the acts of all the parts of the person's body!"

It has been proved through research on the meaning of *Eemaan* that the people who have applied the same meaning to *Islam* and *Eemaan* consider that bearing witness through the mouth is sufficient manifestation of *Eemaan.* Although they cannot be grouped with the infidels according to the norms of *Shariah* for having such belief, on the Day of Reckoning they will be in the formation of the infidels!

ABOUT EEMAAN

.A person who has professed Islam with his tongue, believes in it from the depths of his heart and the parts of his body perform the mandatory religious practices; but has committed some major sin in his past life. Such a person, because of his *Eemaan,* will be shifted from the *Hell* to the *Heaven* after undergoing punishment there for sometime.

The traditions that claim that a *Momin* who commits major sins is excommunicated from the *Group of Momins,* refers to the other type of Muslims who profess *Islam* outwardly and protect themselves from the temptation of committing major sins. Inspite of this, if they commit a major sin, they stand to face the prescribed punishment.

The third type of *Eemaan* is the faith of the Prophets (a.s.), their Vicegerents and their Descendents. They profess their Faith publicly, their hearts are totally committed and their actions are commensurate with their Faith. The most important articles of their Faith are Belief in the Unity of Allah, implicitly observing all Mandatory Practices and abstinence from any acts of sin.

- It has repeatedly come in the traditions that as long as a person is regular at offering the Mandatory prayers, the Satan will be away from him. The moment a person neglects his prayers, Satan will gain ascendancy over him and involve him in sinful acts.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.), " One day the prophet (a.s.) was offering his prayer at the mosque. He noticed a person with emaciated body, yellow mien and sunken eyes. The man was under a stupor of

sleep. The name of the person was Haritha bin Malik. The Prophet (a.s.) asked him, ‘ O Haritha! How are you?’ He said, ‘ O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! My heart is tired now that I am awake praying all night and I fast during the days. I have developed hate for the world and imagine that I am standing at the grounds of the Day of Resurrection (*Mahshar)* and the entire populace is standing there scared and afraid of the inevitable. See the people of the Heaven enjoying the fruits there and the people of the Hell suffering the Hellfire' Hearing this the Prophet (a.s.) said, ‘ Allah has Illumined the heart of this man with the Light of Faith!' The Prophet (a.s.) asked the person to be steadfast in his Faith!"Harith said, " O Prophet (a.s.)! Pray that I get martyred in the Cause of Allah!' The Prophet (a.s.) prayed for him and Harith was martyred in a Jehad the very same year."

- Imam Reza (a.s.) says a *Muslim* is not necessarily a *Momin* nor a *Kafir*. The only benefit he derives from professing Islam is that his execution is not permissible. Nor is he considered *Najis (*unclean). People can eat and drink in his company, can have matrimonial relations with him. Such a Muslim does not believe in the Day of Reckoning that he has to prepare for that day!
- Contrary to the above, a *Momin,* according to the definition given by the Prophet and the Imams (a.s.), professes his Faith publicly, practices it implicitly and holds the Faith strongly in his heart. The Momin deserves Allah's Rewards, qualifies for the Prophet (a.s.)'s Intercession on the Day of Judgement and will not be consigned to the Hell forever if he had committed some sins in his worldly life. His righteous deeds and prayers during his life will not go in vain.
- Hazrat Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, " Knowledge will abandon Action if it doesn't keep pace with it!"

THE FOURTH MAXIM: THE QUALITIES OF SCHOLARS

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that when one finds an *Aalim* (scholar) worldliwise, then he should not follow him. It is observed that a person accumulates only the things he cherishes. One who has sought the 'world' can only give the same to the others! The Imam (a.s.) narrates that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " There are two types of persons in my following. If they are righteous, all others would be righteous. And if they are depraved, all the rest will be depraved.

People asked the Prophet (a.s.), " O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! Who are those two types of persons?"

The Prophet (a.s.) replied," They are the *Ulema (*scholars) and the *Salateen* (rulers).

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said," A Scholar of Jurisprudence (*Aalim Faqih*) is one who encourages the hopes of people in Allah's Blessings, who keeps them reminded of Allah's Retribution for their sins and keeps them in the proximity of the Holy Quran."

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, " There are three types of seekers of knowledge. One should know all the three. The first categories are the litigants who seek knowledge to score points over others in arguments. The second type of seekers of knowledge are those who want self-aggrandizement in the society. They crave for recognition and don't miss any opportunity to achieve this. The third type of seekers of knowledge are those who seek knowledge to practice and put it to good use. The first category of seekers of knowledge tries to create differences and dissension in the society with their bickering and arguments. They will get punished on the Day of Judgement. The second category that seeks self-aggrandizement manifest pride in the gatherings.. When they visit the rich, they assume humility and for the sake of personal benefit they support their false notions. On the Day of Judgement, Allah will make them blind and separate them from the group of the *Ulema*. The third category of the seekers of knowledge who spend their nights in prayer and have the fear that their efforts at the worship of Allah might be rejected by Him.. They are afraid of the retribution of Allah and spend their time seeking His forgiveness. They recognise the people of the world and are conscious that they might cause harm to their Faith. Allah gives strength to such seekers of knowledge and gives them Deliverance on the Day of Judgement.

THE FIFTH MAXIM: ACTION WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," A person who acts without knowledge is like a traveller who is proceeding on an unknown highway. The farther he goes, the farther away he will be from his destination."

Every prayer has certain conditions to be fulfilled. If a person is not aware of these conditions, his prayer will be futile. For every action there is need for specific knowledge about it. If this were not the case, there wouldn't have been any need for Allah to send His Prophets (a.s.). When the highways of the world cannot be traversed without directions and guidance how can the way of the hereafter be found without proper knowledge and guidance.. One must remember that the way to the hereafter is having thousands of stations and also thousands of satanic impediments to distract and misguide the person in his journey.

THE SIXTH MAXIM: REPUDIATION OF EDICTS OF THE INEPT

The gravest sin is to perpetuate lies about Allah and His Prophet (a.s.). A person who is not aware of the Orders of Allah and has no capability to understand them and despite all this pretends to be knowledgeable can earn a place for himself in the Hell. But if he says,

and gives a reference that he had heard that a particular Aalim has given a *Fatwa* (edict) may be pardoned.

Therefore to qualify for giving a *Fatwa* one has to be an Aalim or must have heard of a similar *Fatwa* from another Aalim of repute. Otherwise, the person who gives a *Fatwa* without full knowledge and authority will join the ranks of infidels.

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " O Abu Dharr! It is Allah's Munificence that He has sent the Guides for the people. Offering thanks to Allah throughout one's life will not be sufficient. Every morning and evening one must crave for His Forgiveness for the mistakes committed!"

There are more details on the subject in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8
THE TRAITS-QASAIL

THE FIRST TRAIT:
PRIDE OVER ONE'S PIETY

Being proud about ones own piety is a major sin. This pride can make all the prayers and supplications void. If a person understands the Greatness of Allah, then he will not be proud and vain at his exertions at prayer. The endowments of the munificent Allah are so great that it is impossible to count His Blessings.

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) says, " O Son! Don't delay in offering your prayers. Nor should you be over-confident of the acceptance of your prayers and feel proud of your efforts at piety. We cannot offer prayers and obedience to Allah commensurate with His Blessings.

Imam Reza (a.s.) says that a pious person from Bani Israel offered intense prayers for forty years. Then he offered a sacrifice to Allah that was not accepted. The person was disconsolate with sadness for his failure. He cursed his psyche blaming it for his failure. He received a Revelation that blaming his psyche and accepting the shortcomings pleased Allah more than the prayers spread over the long period of forty years. For this reason Allah accepted his long years of penance..

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that two persons entered the mosque. One was pious and the other a transgressor. When they emerged from the mosque after the prayer, the transgressor was pious and the person with piety had turned a transgressor. The reason was that the pious person came out of the mosque with pride at his piety and the transgressor was penitent at his past misdeeds.

For the benefit of the readers, the translator is digressing here with a tale:

One day Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) was passing through a barren hill. He noticed a pious person busy in prayer sitting in a cave of the hill. Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) felt the urge to meet and talk to the person. He went near and greeted him. The pious person asked disinterestedly, “ Who are you?” Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) said, “ I am Moosa (a.s.)!”

- The person asked, “ Are you the Prophet Moosa (a.s.)?”
- Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) said, “Yes!”
- The person said,” Then ask Allah to Grant my wish!”
- Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) asked, “ What is it that you want?”
- The person said, “ Since the last one hundred years I am sitting here praying to Allah. I don’t do anything other than the Prayer. Ask Allah, what He will give me for my efforts?”
- Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) said, “ I shall find about it immediately.” He immediately climbed up the hill and called aloud, “ O Sustainer Allah! This person wants to know about the reward for his prayers! Tell me, what shall I inform him?”
- He heard the sound, “ O Moosa (a.s.)! Tell him, we shall inform him about his reward tomorrow.”
- Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) went to the person and conveyed the message to him
- The pious man said, “ It’s fine! Tomorrow is not much of a time!” The pious person was in the habit of going to a nearby canal early every morning for bathing and fetching some water for his use. Therefore, the next morning too he started for the canal but he lost his way and reached somewhere else. Because of the sun’s heat he became very thirsty and tired. He sat on a lonely boulder and started thinking about his death. In that time he found a person coming from the other direction. He waved to the person to come to him. When the person came nigh, he asked him to help him with some water.
- The man said, “ Where is any water in this wilderness? Whatever little I have is only for me.”
- The pious person started crying. The other person said, “Fine! What will you give me if I give you a tumbler of water?”
- The pious man said, “ I don’t have anything. I have been busy in the cave praying for the last one hundred years.”
- The man said, “ If you agree to transfer to me the Rewards for your prayers of one hundred years, I shall give you a tumbler of water.”
- The pious man thought, if he lived, he could pray for a further period to get the Reward from Allah. He said, “ I am ready to transfer to you my reward for the hundred years’ of my prayers.

- The man gave him a tumbler full of water and the pious person returned to his cave.
- In the morning Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) got a Revelation that the pious person transferred his hundred years' prayers to another person in exchange for a tumbler of water. Ask the man to settle the value of the tumblers of water that he had been drinking during the last hundred years!
- Therefore, Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) went to the cave and told to the person that he had a message for him from Allah.
- The man said, : O Prophet (a.s.)! I have already sold my hundred years of penance!"
- Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) said, " Yes! I know. But Allah has said that when the value of one hundred years of prayer is one tumbler of water, then he must settle the value of the water he had been drinking over the last hundred years."
- When the pious person heard this, he was shocked and shouted, " O Prophet (a.s.)! Recommend to Allah to forgive my sins! Allah is Beneficent and Merciful!"
- Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) got the Revelation, " tell the pious person! Your penitence of this moment pleased us more than your prayers of a hundred years and we have given to you rewards for a thousand years of prayers!".

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THE SECOND TRAIT:
THANKFULNESS FOR THE BOUNTIES

Among the human virtues, one prominent virtue is gratitude for the bounties received. The opposite of this virtue is ingratitude and thanklessness. Gratitude for the Bounties can be the forerunner of more Bounties coming the person's way. Ingratitude or taking the Bounties for granted might be the cause of reduction in the Bounties bestowed on the person.

The Prophet (a.s.) has said, " Offering thanks to Allah after a meal has the same reward as for having fasted during the month of Ramadhan."

A person expressing his thanks to Allah for a comfortable life is the same as another person thanking the Creator after relief from his difficulties! A rich person expressing gratitude to Allah is the same as a poor, contented person thanking Allah for the square meal he has received!

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that one must say '*Alhamdulillah'* for every good thing he experiences. Thankfulness to Allah on acquisition of wealth is giving a part of it to the needy and the deserving. Thankfulness to Allah for endowing the power of speech is expressing His Praise (*Hamd)* and Encomium (*Sana)*. Similarly, thanking Allah for endowing other senses and making their use in furthering the causes dear to Him. The biggest Bounty Allah has bestowed on humanity is the

Delegation of Mohammed (a.s.) as the Prophet and his Holy Progeny (a.s.) as the Vicegerents to guide the humanity on the Right Path. The only way for expressing gratefulness in this regard is to implicitly follow the norms of do's-and-don'ts laid down by them. When a person thinks of the uncountable Bounties of Allah, he spontaneously utters,' *Alhamdu lillahi Rab il Aalameen- Praise be to the Creator Lord of the worlds.'* If one thinks over a morsel of food he is in the process of eating, he will realize that Allah has, in the creation of that small morsel, bestowed so much care.

Imagine the steps involved in the production of the insignificant morsel of food! The ironsmith and the carpenter made the plough, the farmer and the draft animals ploughed the land, sowed the seed, watered the seedlings, the rain spurred up the growth of the plants, the sun provided light and warmth to the crop, the crop matured and was harvested. The produce went through the process of conversion to flour in the mill. The flour was made into dough and then it was made into bread on the oven. At last the morsel, in the hand of the person, was about to enter his mouth!

It is a matter for conjecture that when the morsel went into the mouth, what all processes took place thereafter. The hands, mouth, teeth, tongue, intestines, the faculty of digestion, the power of retaining food in the body played their part to convert the morsel into energy and blood to circulate in the system to provide him life and sustenance. Does the person have the faculty and capability to thank Allah for designing such a wonderful cycle of production for sustaining and prolonging the human existence on the earth!

Imam Mohammed Taqi (a.s.) narrates that one day Salman Farsi invited Abu Dharr Ghiffari over a meal. He put dried bread dipped in water before Abu Dharr. Abu Dharr said, " *Subhan Allah,* such good bread! How much I wish if there was some salt too!" Salman mortgaged his piece of cloth and fetched some salt. Abu Dharr ate the bread with the salt and thanked Allah for bestowing on him the trait of contentment. Salman Farsi said, " If you had practiced contentment, my piece of cloth wouldn't have been mortgaged!"

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " Allah has exhorted Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) to Thank Him, that thanking Him is the right thing by Him." Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) said," O Creator! How could I fulfill the duty of thanking and praising you that the faculty of doing it has also been endowed to me by you!"

THE THIRD TRAIT:

PENITENCE & CRYING FOR MERCY

For the people of the Faith of Hazrat Mohammed (a.s.), Allah has termed penitence (*tauba)* as a major Bounty or Endowment. He has made the task easier by allowing it to be routed through Mohammed and his Holy Progeny (a.s.). The process of penitence and cries for mercy (*tauba wa astaghfar*) for the people of the earlier prophets had to pass through a very difficult route..

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " If a person plans to do a good act and, for some reason is not able to do it, even then Allah will enter it in the account of his good deeds! If the person performs one good deed, ten are entered in his account! When a person plans a foul deed, it will not be entered to his account till has has practically committed it! Then Allah asks the angels for awaiting expression of penitence (*tauba wa astaghfar*) by the sinner and when he performs some good deed, it is accounted in place of the sin he had committed."

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, " It is better a person abstains from sinning. But Allah considers such sinners his friends who do penitence and cry for mercy (*tauba wa astaghfar*) for their faults. "

PENITENCE FROM SINNING.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that Allah sent a Revelation to Hazrat Dawood (a.s.), " O Dawood (a.s.)! Go to Daniel (a.s.), My Creation, and tell him that he had been disobedient to Me. I forgave him, he again transgressed, I pardoned him! Warn him that if he transgressed a fourth time, I shall not forgive him! When Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) conveyed this message to Hazrat Daniel (a.s.), he said, " O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! You have conveyed the message form Allah, the Creator! You have fulfilled your duty. " When it was dawn, Daniel (a.s.) got busy in his supplications. He said, " O Allah! Your Prophet Dawood (a.s.) conveyed Your Orders to me! By your Greatness and Majesty! If You don't prevent me from sinning, I shall sin the more!."

- It is narrated by an authentic source that the Prophet (a.s.) has said, " If a person is penitent one year prior to his death, he will be pardoned." Then he said, " One year is too long a period, if the person expresses penitence for his sins one-month prior to his demise, he shall be pardoned!" Again the Prophet (a.s.) said, " One month too is a long period, if he is penitent a week before his death, the person will get forgiveness!" The prophet (a.s.) again uttered," One week is rather much, if the person expresses his regret for the sins a day before his death, he will be pardoned!" Finally the Prophet (a.s.) said, " One day too is a longtime,

if the sinner is penitent before witnessing the events of the Day of Judgement, he will be pardoned!"

- It is said that as there is a remedy for pains and aches, so is there a remedy for sins in penitence and crying for forgiveness *(tauba wa astaghfar)*.
- Hazrat Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that a person commits a sin and then expresses penitence after a lapse of twenty years. His penitence is accepted and he is pardoned. An infidel forgets about his sins as soon as he commits them." Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " Whoever says '*Astaghfar Allah'* everyday his seven hundred sins will be pardoned. By Allah, although it is not humanly possible to commit seven hundred sins during the span of a day!" The Imam (a.s.) also added, " Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) passed through a place where a group of people were busy lamenting and crying. He asked someone the reason of the sorrow of those people. They said,' The people are penitent over their past sins!' The Imam (a.s.) said,' They must instead stop sinning to deserve Pardon from Allah'"
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said," No person is closer to Allah than the one who was a sinner and had expressed penitence over his past acts!"
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " I wonder at the person who loses hope in the Munificence of Allah. It is the person who has the means to erase the sins!" Someone asked, " O Master! What is it?" Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied, " Crying for forgiveness! " Perfume oneself with penitence and cries for forgiveness (*tauba wa istafghar)* that the foul smell of sins does not pervade you."
- It is narrated that Maaz bin Jabl went to the presence of the Prophet (a.s.) and started crying. The Prophet (a.s.) asked about the reason of his crying. Maaz cried the more and said, " At the threshold of the mosque there is a handsome youth who is crying as if he has lost a son! He wishes to come to your presence!' the Prophet (a.s.) said, " Bring him along to me." When the youth came to the Prophet (a.s.) and greeted him, the Prophet (a.s.) asked him the reason for his crying. The youth said, " Why shouldn't one cry whose only sin is sufficient ground for consigning him to the Hell?" The Prophet (a.s.) asked the youth, " Have you termed anyone a partner to Allah?" the youth said, " No!" The Prophet (a.s.) then said, " Allah will forgive your sin even if it is as huge as a mountain!" The youth said, " My sin is larger than any mountain!" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " Allah will pardon your sin even if it is greater than the earth and all that is contained in it!" The youth said, " O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! My sin is even greater than that!" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " Allah will forgive your sin even if it is greater than the entire universe and all its contents!" The youth continued to cry and said, " My sin is much more than all that!" The Prophet (a.s.) got angry and said, " Tell me! Allah is Great or your sins are great?" The youth started rolling on the floor in shame and penitence. He said, " O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! My Allah is the Greatest! But my sin is sufficient for His punishing me!" The Prophet (a.s.) said,' Tell me, what is your sin?" The youth said," For seven years I committed thefts of the shrouds of the dead from their graves. Yesterday a pretty girl died. As usual I dug up her fresh grave by night and removed the shroud from her body. I had gone a little distance when I was empowered by the Satan. I thought why I should leave such a pretty body. Therefore I returned to the grave and committed copulation with the cadaver. I must have gone a little

distance after the foul act that a voice said,' O ill-fated brute! What have you done! When we both go to the Presence of Allah on the Day of Judgement, I shall be in this unclean condition! Allah will inflict on you the worst Retribution!" The Prophet (a.s.), after hearing this, stood up and told to his companions, " Remove this transgressor from my sight lest the lightning of retribution burns us along with him!" The youth left the presence of the Prophet (a.s.) and hopelessly wandered in the hills of Medina. For full forty days he expressed intense penitence and cried for forgiveness. He cried and appealed to Allah that if his penitence deserved pardon, He must send a Revelation to the Prophet (a.s.) about it. The Revelation came to the Prophet (a.s.)," O Mohammed (a.s.)! My creature came to you and expressed his penitence and cried for forgiveness! You sent him away disappointed! Where would he go in appeal! Who can pardon him but Me! " Then a verse was revealed, the purport of which was that " those who are penitent of their sins and don't perpetuate sins again, the pardon of such persons is the concern of their Creator." When this verse was revealed, the Prophet (a.s.) smiled, came out of his house, and inquired about the whereabouts of the youth, whose name was Bahlool. The Prophet (a.s.) approached Bahlool along with his companions and found him crying inconsolably and saying, " O Sustainer Allah! I am a penitent sinner! O Munificent Allah! If you have Kindness on me, communicate Your Pardon to me through the mouth of your Prophet (a.s.)!" The Prophet (a.s.) went near him and held his hands. Then he communicated to Bahlool the good news of his Pardon. Bahlool's life thereafter was one of great piety.

Therefore, the sinners should know that it is never too late to mend. Penitence with the resolve not to sin again can be the cause of one's Deliverance!

TYPES OF SINS

The sins from which the believers must express penitence are:

THE FIRST TYPE:

They are the sins that have no punishment prescribed other than the Retribution on the Day of Reckoning. The example of such sins is men wearing raiment made out of silk. It is sufficient that the person is penitent and shuns use of the dress for the rest of his life.

THE SECOND TYPE:

These are the sins for which there is retribution in the Hereafter and punishment in this world too. For some of these sins the person has either to free a slave or give

alms to the poor and deserving in addition to expressing penitence for the sin committed. There are certain Rights of Allah (*Huqooq Allah*), for the transgression of which there are Juristic (*Sharaee)* punishments prescribed. For example, if a person has taken intoxicating beverages. Till the Jurist (*Hakim e Shara*) doesn't know about his act, the person has to approach him to confess his sin and express his penitence. But it is better he abstains from revealing his act and silently expresses his penitence to Allah. If in his sin, he has deprived men of their rights, he must first make amends for that. If there is no monetary rights of others involved in his act but he has encouraged some other person(s) to emulate him in committing the sin, then he should make efforts to set the person(s) right. Then he should express his penitence. If, while committing the sin he has become liable for *Qasaas* (punishment for causing physical injury), all the jurists agree that he must first inform those who have a right for the *qasaas.* He must tell them that he is liable to be executed or pay the *Qasaas.* The persons who have the right for the Qasaas have the option to pardon or to charge the man. Then the sinner should express his penitence and take an oath to refrain from such act in the future. The sins for which the *Sharia* has prescribed punishment, for example, the sin of abusing someone, the subject of such abuse has the right either to punish the person or pardon him. If the subject doesn't know about the abuses heaped on him, some jurists opine that the perpetrator of the abuses should not inform the person and quietly express his penitence over the act. The jurists say that the prescriptions for the punishments are there irrespective of whether penitence expressed by the sinner or not. If these conditions are not fulfilled, there will be Retribution in the Hereafter. Some traditions indicate that fulfillment of these Juridical conditions are the precursors of the pardon for the sinner in the Hereafter. Complete penitence is total abstinence from the sin for the rest of the life of the person.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says, " A person said '*astaghfar Allah'* in the presence of the Prophet (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) said, 'What do you know about asking forgiveness (*astaghfar)?* The *Astaghfar* has six parts to its meaning:
First: penitence over the past sins,
Second: firm commitment to Allah for not sinning again,
Third: Paying the rights of people from one's own assets,
Fourth: Fulfilling the mandatory duties that were not performed in the past,
Fifth: Shedding the weight that was gained during the period one was sinning,
Sixth: Busying oneself in prayers with the same intensity with which the person indulged in the acts of sin.

One should say '*Astghfar Allah'* if he abides by these conditions."

THE WAYS OF ASKING FOR SUSTENANCE

The Prophet (a.s.) has said, " O Abu Dharr! One who is sluggish in seeking sustenance, the other person will not be able to grab his share. To the contrary one

who is avaricious in his search and makes undue efforts, may not get more than Allah has allocated for him. “

“ One who has the inclination of doing a good turn, that has Allah’s approval and when the person abstains from committing foul deeds, he must be thankful to Allah for His Help.”

Many verses of the Quran and traditions of the Prophet (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.) go to prove that the things essential for sustenance of life are the gifts of Allah. The jurists differ about the *Haram* (illegitimate) acquisition of the means by some having Allah’s approval. It is a fact that Allah has apportioned *Halal* (legitimate).sustenance for everyone. If a person, in his greed does not use illegitimate means to acquire his needs, he can certainly get them through fair means.

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that the Prophet (a.s.), on the day of *Hajjat al Vidha* (the Last Pilgrimage), had said,” Jibrael has told me that no living creature dies till it uses the quota of food apportioned by Allah for its lifetime. O people! Have fear of Allah! Adopt equity! Don’t make haste in acquiring means of sustenence. If there is delay in getting the food, don’t use illicit means to get it. Don’t earn Allah’s ire by recourse to foul means. Allah has promised fair sustenance to everyone. When one waits patiently and makes fair trials, he certainly gets his needs. One who uses cunning and stratagem to acquire and hoard more than his needs, Allah might reduce what he has been allocated to receive legitimately. Further, on the Day of Judgement, one will have to account for the use of the sources of livelihood in his lifetime. It is wrong to think that there is no need to strive to acquire sustenance when Allah has promised the daily bread to all. There are certain means of livelihood that reach a person only with sincere efforts.. There are certain other things that a person gets without trying for them. Some other can come through sincere prayers to Allah.
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that a true Muslim is one who doesn’t displease Allah to gain favor with men. He should also not blame others for what Allah has not given to him. Avarice need not enhance the means of a person or abhorrence of the means of livelihood decrease it in any way. If a person runs away from the means of livelihood as one does from death, even then he will continue to live till the appointed time.

MAKING SUPPLICATIONS TO ALLAH

It is reliably narrated from Hussain bin Alwan that he, along with some other students, was on a journey. On the way they ran out of the money for the expenses. One of his friends asked him, “ Whom do you expect to come to our rescue in this time of need.” Hussain bin Alwan mentioned a person’s name. The other student said,” By Allah! You will not succeed in getting the help!” He asked, “ How are you so sure about it?” The other student said, “ I have heard from Imam Jafar e Sadiq

(a.s.) that Allah has observed in one of His Books, ' I shall shatter the hopes of the person who expects help from anyone other than Me! I shall make him wretched and miserable in the eyes of his friends. I shall deprive him of My Bounties! I shall not allow him to come near Me. He expects to find succor from others when everything is in My Power! He is knocking at others doors when the keys to all the doors are with Me! All the doors are locked and My Doors are always open for those who supplicate to Me! When did this person approach me in times of difficulty and I refused him help! Peoples needs and wishes are with me! I grant them whenever required! Are they not happy in My Protection! My Firmament is full of beings that busy themselves in My Prayer! I have ordered them to keep the doors of My Bounties open. Then why people don't believe in My Munificence? Don't they know that when a calamity comes, none other than Me can avert it for them! Why is man so forgetful of Me! I have bestowed on him lot of Bounties without asking for them! Then why is he stretching his hand before others for help! Does he think that I would not give him what he askedfor! Am I miserly? Is not Generosity My trait! Am I not the Provider of the needs of all the creations? Aren't those who expect help from others afraid of Me! If all the inhabitants of the earth and the skies demand fulfillment of their wishes at one time, I can grant them instantaneously! This will not make the difference equal to the size of an ant in My Possessions! How unfortunate is the person who disobeys Me and has no fear of Mine!"

THE COMPANY OF SCHOLARS

- It is narrated from Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) that it is better to sit with a learned person in his poor and untidy surroundings than in a posh saloon with an uneducated person.
- The prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " Hazrat Eesa was asked by his disciples, ' O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! What sort of people one should sit with?' He said,' Sit with persons who remind you of Allah! Their talk should enhance your knowledge and their actions remind you of the Hereafter!'"
- It is narrated that Hazrat Luqman (a.s.) advised his son, " O my son! Judge people before you make them your friends and companions! If you find persons who always remember Allah, do sit with them! If you are learned, your learning will benefit you. If he is more learned than you, then you will derive benefit from his company. The Blessing that Allah bestows on him, you might get a share of that! Don't sit with those who do not remember Allah. If you are learned, your learning may not benefit them. If you are ignorant, your ignorance will enhance in the company of such persons. The curse that comes to them from Allah, you will be receiving a part of it!"

DONOT BELITTLE SIN

Man should not think that a minor sin to be a trivial thing not to worry about! However small a sin, its consequences might be very grave! When one commits minor sins, Satan emboldens and makes the person perpetuate sinful acts in the future. A time comes when the person thinks that the major sins too are trivial. Therefore not repenting minor sins is in itself a major sin. Some times sins assume the shape of infidelity and hypocrisy! Therefore one should treat a sin as a sin, however small or minor it might be. Therefore Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " A thing, howsoever small, that can benefit a person on the Day of Reckoning, is not small. Similarly a small thing that can bring retribution to the person on the Day of Judgement cannot be termed small."

- Imam Reza (a.s.) has said, " The minor sins are the way to commitment of the major sins! The person who commits minor sins, might indulge in major sins also! Even if Allah had not created the Heaven and the Hell, as incentive and disincentive respectively, for acts fair and foul, he would even then have made it mandatory for men to pray. His disobedience would even then be punishable because He has endowed man with lot of Blessings to thank about!"
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " Don't consider sin minor, however insignificant that might be. Don't also rate your virtues high, however significant they might be! The major sins can be condoned with *Asthghfar* (Craving mercy from Allah) but repetition of minor sins might render them major!"
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says, " One of the sins that may not be condoned is one saying, ' I wish there is no retribution for my sins other than this!'"
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " Forty sins of a person will remain hidden under forty curtains. Once he completes the forty sins, the curtains get torn and the angels responsible for recording the sins of men submit to Allah,' All the curtains hiding the sins of the person have gone up!' Allah asks them to hide the sins with their wings. The person continues to commit more sin and keeps bragging with his compatriots. The angels tell to Allah, ' O Allah! This person doesn't abstain from any type of sin! We feel ashamed of watching him commit sins!' Then Allah asks them to remove the cover of their wings. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) added, " Now the person starts showing antagonism to us, the *Ahl al Bayt*, and Allah makes him the subject of ridicule on the earth and in the Heavens. The angels then tell to Allah, ' This creature of Your's was protected for long and is facing much more ridicule now! Then Allah will say,' If I had noticed any virtue in him, I wouldn't have asked you to lift the cover of your wings from his sins!'"
- It is narrated that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said," It is easier to avoid sinning than being penitent after committing them. A moment's emotion can become the cause of shame for long. Death does not leave any time for the person to make amends for his wrong acts."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, " When Allah wishes a person well, He involves him in severe hardship after he commits a sin. This hardship makes the person repent and do penance. If Allah finds no ray of virtue in the man, then He removes the desire for penitence and regret from the sinner's mind to remain in his own world of sin and abuse. Allah says in His Holy Book, ' *We test them in a way that they don't feel that they are being tested. They indulge, more and more,*

in sins and We keep sending bounties to them (that they don't think of penitence for their sins.).'"

TAUBA WA IZTAGHFAR
PENITENCE & ASKING FORGIVENESS

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said " Allah keeps friends with such persons who are penitent after committing sins and pray for His pardon. Allah doesn't like a person who commits minor sins and remains oblivious of his faults." Then the Imam (a.s.) added," Fear very much the minor sins that you might commit. Beware, these minor sins may not be condoned!" Someone asked the Imam (a.s.), " What are those sins?" The Imam replied," When a person says after committing a sin,' how I wish I had not committed any other sin than this!"
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that when a person asks for a boon from Allah and just before his prayer is answered he commits a sin; Allah orders the Angels to defer the grant of his wish. Then the Imam (a.s.) added," in certain years some places receive little rainfall. Wherever Allah wishes He sends the rain. When the people of a nation are involved more in sin, the share of rainfall for them is reduced and it is shifted to the high seas and the mountains. While the people of the area are punished for their sins, even the animals and plants suffer for no fault of theirs." Then the Imam (a.s.) added," O people with wisdom! Take warning from this!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says," Sometimes because of the ill effect of sins a person veers away from the mandatory prayers." The Imam (a.s.) added," A person thinks of a sin and commits it thinking that there are many others that do the same. Allah says in this regard,' *By My Majesty and Honour! I shall never pardon him!'*
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said," On the Day of Judgement some people will be incarcerated for a hundred years only for committing one sin! Looking at the comforts enjoyed by the inmates of the Heaven these sinners will feel repentant."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says," Allah has decided that He will not take away the bounties from a man till he has not committed any sin."
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said," there is no pain more severe for a man than that of sin and there is no fear for him more than the fear of death. For a reminder taking lesson from the experience of the forbears is sufficient."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says," the sin that causes reduction in the bounties is pride and disobedience of Allah. The sin that brings repentance to a man is the murder of a human being. The sin that brings retribution of Allah is cruelty to others. An example of a sin that is hidden is consumption of intoxicants. The sin that affects the means of livelihood is adultery. The sin that reduces the longevity

of a person is depriving the rights of others. The sin that obstructs acceptance of prayers is ill treatment and disobedience of the parents."

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s) has said," Allah will torture the tongue more than any part of human body on the Day of Judgement. The tongue will submit,' O Allah! Why are you giving more punishment than to the other part of the body?' Allah will say,' O tongue! One word came from you and traveled all through the east and the west. Innumerable disputes and fights raised their heads because of this and caused unfathomable damage to men and material!'

THE SUPERIORITY OF PRAYER

Hazrat Abu Dharr relates from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.)," the light and coolness of my eyes is prayer (*Salat*). The prayer is as dear to me as a hungry person wanting food or a thirsty person wanting to have water. The hungry and the thirsty person are sated when their need is fulfilled but my desire for prayer is never satisfied. I am not born in celibacy (*rahbaniat*). I love women and the fragrances. But the pleasure for my eyes is in prayer. A person who offers twelve optional prayers in addition to the mandatory prayers everyday, will compulsorily find a place in the Heaven. When a pious person stands up for prayer, blessings will be showered on him from the Firmament. Man should be thankful of the bounties of Allah and keep doing penitence for his faults. He should strive to earn legitimate livelihood that Allah has promised him. Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that at the time of the last Haj, the Prophet (a.s.) had observed that a person doesn't die till he has consumed the last morsel of sustenance earmarked for him. Striving for livelihood is necessary for every person but he has to be contented that Allah is providing the sustenance to him. This is the sign of strong Faith. One should have a firm belief on," *As sayee minni wa itmam min Allah."* (This will be like the modern time adage;' man proposes and God disposes.) One should thank Allah for His bounties. If someone is an agent for providing this sustenance, the person should also be thankful to him but it is very essential to always be thankful to Allah for providing the daily bread essential for living. It is in fact His blessing that he makes another person the agent for providing livelihood to him.

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," O Abu Dharr! If a person understands that he is the worshipper of the Greatest Allah, then there is no question of his committing any sins whether the minor ones or the major. O Abu Dharr! In the world my dearest thing is prayer. If man knows that he is prostrating to the Greatest he will never bring up his head from the prostrated position. As an explanation for this a few brightnesses (*Lamaat*) are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER: 9
LAMAAT

THE RAYS OF LIGHT

THE FIRST RAY OF LIGHT: ABOUT PRAYER (NAMAZ)

After considering the beliefs of Faith, we now discuss about the physical and practical tenets. The most important of these is *Salat/Namaz* or mandatory and optional prayers. Therefore in the call for prayer, the *Adhan,* it is announced '*Hai aala khairil aml*.'- come and join the best of acts! But there is one group that chose to avoid using this expression in their *Adhan!*

Salat, as announced in every call for the prayer, is the most important aspect of the practice of the Muslim Faith. This doesn't mean that having performed the most important act, there isn't need for practicing the other tenets.

In His Perfect Wisdom, Allah has devised the most beneficial norms of action for the human race. For example, one might say that the meat is the best of foods. But this doesn't mean that the other foods are not good! Can we imagine someone eating the meat to his satisfaction and not drinking the water! This proves that everything is necessary and has to be used judiciously. It is quite another matter that there are degrees of importance of various things.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, that among the tenets of practice in Islam, the best is the *Salat.* When a person has taken the bath of purification, has done his ablutions and goes to a corner to offer his *Salat,* the Satan pleads that the progeny of Adam (a.s.) is prostrating to Allah while he has himself refused to accept Allah's Command and did not prostrate!
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) says that the *Salat* in Islam can be compared to the perpendicular pillar of a tent on which the entire structure of the tent rests. If the pillar is removed, nothing else in the tent will be of any use.
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) says, "An old person's account of deeds will be considered on the Day of Reckoning, and when it will be noted that his good deeds are less than his bad deeds, Allah will say,' This old man used to offer prayers and I feel sorry to consign him to the Hell!' Then Allah will order the angels to take the man to the Heaven!"
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said that on the Day of Reckoning, *Salat* will be the first thing about which the people will be questioned. If a person was regular in offering his *Salat,* the way to Heaven will be smooth for him. Otherwise, the person will be consigned to the Hell."
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says that if a person visualizes about the Greatness of Allah during his *Salat,* he will remain in prostration the rest of his life."

THE SECOND RAY OF LIGHT: DIFFERENCES IN JURISPRUDENCE AND CENSURE OF HYPOCRICY

The superior Prophets (a.s.) were all endowed with their own *Shariah (*Jurisprudence) that was relevant to their times. The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) too brought with him the perfect *Shariah*. If there was juridical change with each prophet (a.s.), it doesn't mean that the earlier laws were defective in any manner.

Since the followers of Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) were very mischievous, stringent punishments were prescribed to reform them.. It was the rule, for example, that if someone got some urine splashed on his body , the skin of that part was peeled off. For murder, there was no other punishment than death.

The people of Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) were mild natured. They were not required to do *Jehad.* Capital punishment was not practiced. Celibacy and living like hermits was in vogue.

The people of our Prophet (a.s.) were moderates. The *Shariah,* therefore, is middle of the road. For the crime of murder, *Qasas* (life-for-life) and *Deet* (payment of blood money) are both permitted. In cases of bodily harm, the right to pardon has been given to the sufferer or his successors in the event of his death.

INNOVATION EXPLAINED

Interpreting or changing the *Shariah* using ones inept and unbefitting intellect is apostasy and heresy. Getting misled by Satan and praying with ones own intuition and considering this as nearness to Allah is gross ignorance (*Jehalat).* Our intellects are a combination of good, bad and indifferent. The Prophets (a.s.), on the other hand, have been endowed with superior intellects and the laws enunciated by them have Allah's seal of approval. Any deviation from them is hypocrisy and heresy. For example: a pious Christian celibate thinks that if he died inflicting hardship on himself in seclusion, he would earn nearness to God! This is sheer misguided ignorance.

Bidaa (innovation) means declaring things taboo that are termed good by Allah and declaring things good that are taboo according to the dictates of the Almighty. For example, Allah has allowed (*Mustaheb)* offering of prayers (optional) without restriction of timing. But if someone thinks that he should offer prayer exactly at the time of sunset thinking that Allah has strictly prescribed that timing is sheer innovation and is *haram.* Hazrat Omar has prescribed six *Rakaat* (acts of standing, genuflection and prostration) of optional (*sunnati)* prayer exactly at the time of mid-morning (*chasht*). This is an innovation and *Haram.* Our Imams (a.s.) have forbidden this practice. Similarly if some one offers three *rakat* of optional (*Sunnati*)

prayer, it would be an innovation. Similarly doing two genuflections (*Ruku)* in one *rakat* is an innovation because the Prophet has never adopted this practice. Another example: Repeating the words *La ilaha il Allah* continuously is the practice (*Sunna)* of the Prophet (a.s.) and is extremely beneficial to the supplicant. But prescribing it as compulsory *sunnat* to be repeated twelve thousand times after the morning-prayer is an innovation. The Prophet (a.s.) never prescribed this practice.

Bidaa or innovation in the religious practices is a big sin. There has always been a dispute between the *Shia* and *Sunni* Muslims that *Shias* have been emulating their *Imams* (that are exactly in accordance to the practice of the Holy Prophet!) and the *Sunnis* have been abstaining from following the *Ahl al Bayt.* They have been using their own poor intellects and have given rise to several innovations. Our Imams (a.s.) have therefore rejected them.

- Kulaini quotes from a reliable source that the Prophet (a.s.) has said," Every hypocrisy is heresy, and the way a heretic takes leads him to the Hell."
- It is narrated that a person asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) and Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.), " How should I offer prayers to Allah?" They said, " Don't do innovations in the Religion. Whoever interferes with the tenets of the Faith, he gets punished. One who veers away from the pronouncements of the Prophet (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.) has gone astray. One who disobeys Allah is an infidel!"
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said, " One who uses his own mind in religious matters and gives *fatwa* is interfering in the affairs of Allah. He commits the blunder of determining *Halal* and *Haram* wrongly through his own intuition."
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " The innovator is the person who shuns the *Sunna* (the practices) of the Holy Prophet!"
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," When innovation raises its head amongst my people, the *Ulema* should propagate their knowledge to stop the spread of the innovations. If the *Ulema don't do this, they are the accursed (the malaoon).* The Prophet (a.s.) added, " A person who visits an innovator and pays respects to him, he is tantamount to abetting the spoiling of Islam!" The Prophet (a.s.) also said, " Allah does not answer the prayers of an innovator!" " The love for the innovations gets fixed in the heart of the innovator and never leaves him!"

THE TALE OF A SEEKER OF THE WORLD

- Ibne Babawiyah quotes through a reliable source that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has told about a person who lived in the olden days. The man sought to find livelihood through fair means. He failed. He tried illegitimate means and even then he didn't succeed. Satan came to him and told him that he would suggest a

stratagem to the man to succeed in his efforts. The person agreed. Satan suggested to him to float a new religion. Encourage people to join its ranks. The man acted on the suggestion and soon became very rich. One day the man thought that he had committed the foulest of deeds. He felt that he had led lots of people astray. He realized that any amount of penitence would not get him a pardon unless he corrected the people who had left the right path because of him. He started telling people that the faith propagated by him was a farce and they should abandon it. But the idea was engrained in their minds and they told him that his faith was authentic and that he was lying to them. He could not change even a single person. In desperation he went to the forest and tied himself in a heavy chain. He resolved that unless Allah forgave him for his sin he would not free himself. Allah sent a Revelation to the Prophet (a.s.) of the time that the person must be informed that even if his body goes to shreds repenting his sin, his penitence would not be accepted! The only way for his pardon was through reforming all the persons who had been led away from the right path by him!

- It is reported from Halabi that he asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " O Imam (a.s.)! Tell me about the smallest thing that can turn a believer into an infidel?" The Imam (a.s.) said, " It is innovation by the person in the matters of Faith! A person who follows the innovator too is an infidel and also one who opposes the adversaries of the innovator!"
- Abi Rabi Shami says that he asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " O Imam (a.s.)! What is it that expels a person from the Faith?" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Conviction against righteousness and insisting on that!"
- Bareed Ajali reports that he asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " O Imam (a.s.)! What is it that makes a person an infidel?" The Imam (a.s.) picked a few pebbles from the ground. And said, " A person who says that these are the seeds of dates!" The Imam (a.s.) further added, " This would mean that the person is speaking against the factual position. Similarly when a person speaks against the True Faith and hates its followers. Such a person is a *Nasibi,* an infidel!"
- It is narrated that people asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.), "What is the meaning of *Sunnat, Bidaat, Jamaat* and *Furfat*?" The Imam (a.s.) replied. " *Sunnat* is what the Prophet (a.s.) of Islam has enunciated and put into practice. *Jama-at* are the people living with whom the Prophet (a.s.) has exhorted, these are the Righteous (*Ahl e Haq*). However small in numbers these *Ahl e Haq* might be.. *Furfat* are the group of persons the Prophet (a.s.) has warned his people not to follow. These persons are the misguided group! They might be in larger numbers!
- Kulaini narrates from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.), " Allah has not missed anything that is necessary for His people. He communicated all of it to the Prophet (a.s.) and Revealed in the Holy Quran. He fixed the measure for everything and Has Prescribed punishment for exceeding the limits."
- Authentic sources narrate from Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.), " The best act in the consideration of Allah, however small, is that which is in accord with the *sunnat* of the Prophet of Islam (a.s.)."
- It is narrated from Hazrat Ali (a.s.) that the Prophet (a.s.) said," Saying something without acting on it is futile. Belief and action are both futile if the

intent is not right. And all the three are of no use if they are not in accordance with the precept and the *sunna* of the Prophet (a.s.)."

- It is said that when Satan refused to prostrate to Hazrat Adam (a.s.) and Allah's curse was inflicted on him, he said," O Allah! Excuse me from prostrating to Adam (a.s.)! I shall offer prostrations to an extent that any angel or prophet (a.s.) would never do!" Allah observed," We don't need your supplications! Obeying My Orders in itself is supplication to Me!"
- Sheik Toosi narrates from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the Prophet (a.s.) said," O people! It is mandatory for you to follow my *Sunna!* Doing small things according to the *sunna* is better than doing more through innovation (*Bidat)*."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says," If you have any doubts about the matters of Faith, refer them to us. We shall explain them to you!"
- Imam Mehdi (a.s.) says," If you get doubts about the tenets of *Shariah,* refer to the narrators of our traditions. They (*the Ulema*) are the authorities (*Hujjat*) for you and we are the authority (*Hujjat*) from Allah for them."
- Authentic sources narrate a tradition that if one has doubt about matters of religion, he must refer to the people who are well versed about *Halal* and *Haram.* Consider them your referee that Allah has appointed them as such. If you reject their advice, it will be tantamount to rejecting our orders and Allah's Orders! One who rejects Allah's Orders is a polytheist (*mushrik)* and infidel. Bear in mind that on the Day of Reckoning Allah will condone following anyone who is fully conversant with the orders of the *Ahl al Bayt* and do not make interpretations with ulterior motives of worldly gains.

THE IDENTITY OF THE ULEMA

Imam Hasaan Askari (a.s.) narrates form Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.), " When you see a person who has the appearance of a religious scholar, gives deep thought in giving opinion on religious matters, shows excessive humility in his dealings, don't make haste in falling to his stratagems. There are plenty of people who, for worldly gains, pretend to be what they are not in reality. If you notice that the person is not interested in material gains, manifests external piety, even then one should be careful in deciding about his authenticity. Remember! There are many kinds of mundane desires. If a person is not interested in wealth, he might be inclined towards other things that are against the Law of the Religion (*Shara).* If you are sure that the person is free of these aberrations too, you have to observe him further that there are some persons who lack in intellect and for this failing sometimes they cause grave damage to the Religion in their ignorance. Even after assuring yourself about this, observe the person further unless you know that his emotions don't prevail over his better sense in any matter. Ensure that he doesn't prefer worldly pomp (*Riyasat)* and show. There are many persons in this world who lose their Faith in search of worldly gains! They may be deprived of both! Because of these sins Allah removes His Munificence and Mercies from them and leaves them in the morass of depravity. Then they start pronouncing as legitimate (*Halal)* what is termed taboo (*Haram*) by

Allah and they try to prove *Haram* things that are deemed *Halal* by the Almighty. For worldly pomp the person forgets his Religious obligations. These are the people who will be the accursed of Allah and will have stringent Retribution in store for them!

A bold person is one who controls his carnal desires. He expends his energies in the way of Allah. He will have a firm belief that he has to prepare for the benefits of the Hereafter in this life. He knows that the worldly fame and adulation is transitory. If he has to bear some hardship in this world to follow the dictates of the Faith, he is sure of the perpetual pleasure and benefits in the other world. He will have all the qualities that make him fit and ideal for emulation (*taqleed) by others. His prayers are always answered!*

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says, " Two persons break my back! The first, a person who is wise but is a transgressor and immoral. The second,.one who is ignorant but keeps himself very much busy in prayer. The first person misguides others with his wrong acts. The second sets a bad example for others with his excessive indulgence in prayer. O people! Beware of the transgressing scholar and the ignorant worshipper because their emulation might lead you astray. I have heard the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) say,' 'My people will suffer at the hands of the hypocrites!'"
- It is narrated that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) told to Abu Hamza Shimali ," O Hamza! Beware pomp and pelf! Avoid making disciples and also avoid following others!" Abu Hamza said, " O Imam (a.s.)! Pomp I don't know of, but I have been emulating others that I tried to find your sayings from them! " The Imam (a.s.) replied, " I don't mean what you have understood from my talk. But remember, every act doesn't qualify one for a reward. Bearing every hardship doesn't bring one nearer to Allah! The yardstick of judging acts, good or bad, is according to the Ordinance of Allah and His Prophet (a.s.). The Deliverance is only through this route.

The unfortunate Jews are very rigid about not accepting any change in their *Shariat.* They don't accept that in later periods Allah could have made amendments and changes in the *Shariat.* The changes are not because of the ignorance of the commentator or interpreter. But they are because of the changed circumstances and needs of the times. A physician, while treating his patient, changes the medicine as he makes progress towards the cure. Similarly, the *Shariat* has to undergo changes to suit the circumstances and the times. Therefore, the Prophet of Islam (a.s.), and the Infallible Imams (a.s.) after him, have laid down the norms of *Shariah,* for their times. Any alteration, addition or deletion of these is tantamount to innovation (*Bidaat)* that is taboo (*Haram).*

THE THIRD RAY OF LIGHT:
ABOUT CELIBACY

Reclusiveness, abstinence from women and the legitimate pleasures of life is the practice of the celibate monks. It was prevalent in the people of Hazrat Eesa (a.s.). But this is prohibited for the followers of Hazrat Mohammed (a.s.) the Last Prophet. Marriage, the *Nikah,* is a practice enjoined by the Prophet (a.s.) on his people. It is termed as a *Sunnat e muwakkidah* or a practice particularly to be adhered to by the people.

A monk, who practices celibacy, keeps away from good food, good raiment, women and company of people. Hazrat Essa (a.s.)'s followers used to castrate themselves and go into the caves of the jungle to spend lonely lives there. They used to wear rough cloth and hated every comfort of life.

CELIBACY CONDEMNED

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " The people of my Faith should keep away from celibacy and should opt for *Jehad* instead. Instead of castrating themselves, they should have recourse to fasting. He said that there is great reward for men mating with women, celibacy is taboo in Islam.. When a man looks at his mate, two angels cover him with their wings as if he is making *Jehad* in the way of Allah. When the man is in the process of mating with his spouse, his sins will drop away the same way the leaves of trees drop in the season of fall. When the person takes a bath of cleanliness thereafter, his sins will be washed away.

- Imam Raza (a.s.) said, " the prophets (a.s.) practiced three things--: use of perfumes, clipping away excessive hair and mating with their spouses."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that two genuflections (*Rakaat)* of prayer of a married person are better than seventy of the unmarried. One who opts for the *Nikah* (the ritual of marriage) would save half of his Faith." Then he added," A person came to my revered father (a.s.). He asked him,' Do you have a wife?' The person said, 'No!' The Imam (a.s.) told him,' I won't be happy with every comfort of life if I don't have the company of my spouse in the night!' Then he added,' Two genuflections of a married person is better than the parayer that an unmarried person offers the whole night and fasts every day!' Then he gave some Dirhams to the person to purchase the paraphernalia for his marriage and told him that Allah would enhance his livelihood if he married."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that three women approached the Prophet (a.s.) to complain about their husbands. One complained that her husband didn't eat meat, the second said her spouse disliked perfumes and the third said that her husband keeps away from her.. The Prophet (a.s.) was angry. He went to the Mosque and asked the people to gather. Then he said, " Listen to me! I eat meat, use perfumes and mate with my spouses! *Nikah* (the ritual of marriage) is my *Sunnat!* One who refrains from my *Sunnat* is not one with me! Marry that your livelihood increases! Two genuflections of a married person are better than the prayers of an unmarried person offered throughout the night!"

THE FOURTH RAY OF LIGHT:
RECLUSIVENESS CONDEMNED

A person told to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " O Imam (a.s.)! A person holds the Shia Faith and is a firm believer. But he has gone into reclusion and doesn't meet his friends and relatives.

The Imam (a.s.) said, " How will he learn about the matters of Religion if he runs away from company of people?" Then the Imam (a.s.) added," O people! You must regularly offer prayers in congregation at the mosque. You should try to meet pious and good persons. In time of need you must bear witness in their matters. Join the funeral processions of Momins. Human life is not possible without social interaction of people in the society."

- The Imam (a.s.) said, " One Muslim has seven rights over other Muslims. If one of these rights is not honored, then a person might be excluded from the roster of Allah's friends. The smallest right of a Muslim over his compatriots is that whatever one wishes for himself, he should wish the same for his brethren. Similarly whatever he dislikes to happen to him, he should want not to happen to his brothers in Islam. The second right is: that a Muslim should avoid displeasing another Muslim. The Third right consists in that a Muslim should help another both physically and monetarily to the extent possible. The fourth right of a Muslim is that he must guide other Muslims to the best of his abilities. The fifth right is that if a Muslim is hungry, the other should share his food with him. The sixth right is that if one has a servant and the other doesn't, then the servant should be sent to the other for a part of the time. The seventh right is that he should visit the other Muslim when called, take care of him while sick and participate in the funeral rites when there is a death. Fulfil the other Muslim's needs without his asking for help. When these rights are taken care of, then there will be amity and love between the members of the society."
- Then the Imam (a.s.) told to his companions, " Do good deeds. Live like brothers and sisters. Your friendship should always be in Allah's way and when you meet, discuss the matters of Faith and Religion. Keep the True Faith alive and give it strength. Doing something for a *Momin* is equivalent to freeing a thousand slaves. It is also better than sending a thousand horsemen for *Jehad.*
- The traditions that hint at keeping away from people point to maintaining a distance from bad company. Because such company might cause some harm to a person's Faith. Meeting the virtuous and admonishing the sinners has always been the wont of the Prophets (a.s.). This act is more superior to many.. Staying at home is advised only to keep men away from bad companions.
- The Prophet (a.s.) has said that a Muslim who starts his day not giving a thought to the needs of his other Muslim Brothers is not a true Muslim. A Muslim who finds another in trouble and does not help him, is not a Muslim.
- Someone asked the Prophet (a.s.) as to who is the most beloved person of Allah? The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " One who is of help to other human beings!" Another

asked, “ O Prophet (a.s.)! Can Allah be seen?” The Prophet (a.s.) replied, “ Why not! Go to meet a Momin. The reward that one gets in meeting a pious person is equal to that of meeting Allah!”

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said that helping a Muslim Brother could beget more Blessings from Allah than freeing a thousand slaves.

THE FIFTH RAY OF LIGHT:
HONEST LIVELIHOOD
KASB E HALAL

Authentic traditions indicate that striving to acquire wealth through fair means is legitimate and necessary. It is the duty of a person to make his best efforts and the success or failure is in the hands of Allah. One should always have his sights on, *Assayee minni wa itmam min Allah.* One who trusts on Allah, Allah is sufficient for him!

If a person is not able to earn sufficiently after all the efforts, he should be contented with what he has. If the honest livelihood (*Kasb e Halal)* is meagre, one should prune his expenses by avoiding unnecessary luxeries. He should not be attracted to riches if they are coming through unfair means. If he gets huge sums through fair means, he should first disburse the Prescribed Rights and then spend the rest for his family and other needy persons. He should eat well, live well but avoid waste and lavishness!

The Prophet (a.s.) has said that if a person has five dates or five *naans* or five Dirhams, the best way of expending them is to first use them for his parents. Secondly on himself and his family, then on relatives and neighbours and lastly on the poor and needy. Allah has warned people against extravagance and He doesn’t like miserliness too. One should not spend so little as to keep the family half fed, nor waste money extravagantly.

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THOSE WHOSE PRAYER IS NOT ANSWERED

It has come in the traditions that the Prophet (a.s.) has said. In my *Ummat* there are some people whose prayers are not accepted. Among them are those who pray for harm to their own parents. Then,, there are those who give loans and don’t take a

witness for these transaction. The third category is of such men who, when in disagreement with their spouses, reproach them continuously, instead of giving them divorce (*Talaq)* which is allowed to them by Allah.. The fourth type is of persons who don't make any serious effort to earn livelihood and sit at home praying to Allah to provide him sustenance. Allah says," O my creature! I have provided to you the means for earning your livelihood. I have given you the limbs to work and earn a living. Even after sincere efforts if you are unable to earn, pray for My Help!" The fifth type is of the persons who have been gifted with lot of wealth that they squander. Then they pray to Allah to give them more. Allah's response will be that they were given plenty. Why didn't they use their wealth frugally instead of squandering it. Allah doesn't like extravagance (*israaf).* The sixth category of such persons is of those who talk ill of their kith and kin.

- When Hazrat Salman Farsi used to receive his allowance, he used to keep aside sufficient to meet the expenses for the year and distribute the remainder to the needy. Someone said," Salman! Because you are a very old and pious person, you can afford to be charitable!" Salman said," O ignorant person! You don't know that like death, life too is unpredictable. Don't you know that when a person has no means of livelihood, he will be worried? When the person has with him the means of sustenance, he will be contented and at rest.
- Hazrat Abu Dharr used to earn his livelihood from sheep rearing. He used to entertain his guests by slaughtering his sheep. When there used to be more persons to feed, he used to slaughter more animals. He used to distribute portions to everyone and keep an equal portion for himself. It has to be noted that these two, Salman and Abu Dharr, were very dear and highly respected companions of the Prophet (a.s.). They were charitable and frugal at the same time. They did help the needy but saved something for themselves that they didn't suffer penury because of extravagance.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) freed a thousand slaves with his earnings from hard physical labor.
- A reliable source narrates that Asbat bin Salim went to the presence of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). The Imam (a.s.) inquired about Omer bin Muslim. Asbat said, " O Imam (a.s.)! He is in good health but has stopped his business activity!" The Imam (a.s.) said, " This is the work of Satan!" The Imam (a.s.) repeated the sentence thrice, and added, " Doesn't Omer know that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) himself used to do trading? Once a caravan arrived from Syria. The Prophet (a.s.) bought some merchandize from them. He got so much profit from that deal that he cleared all his debt. The remainder he distributed to his kith and kin."
- It is narrated that Omer bin Yazid told to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) ," O Imam (a.s.)! A person says that he always remains at home. He keeps himself occupied with prayers and fasting. He says that his livelihood comes to him without stirring out!" Hearing this the Imam (a.s.) said, " He is one of the three persons whose prayer is never answered!"

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said," A person who works hard to earn and provide sustenance to his family, to help his neighbors and friends, will have a face as bright as the full moon on the Day of Judgement."
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," Allah's worship is of seventy types. The best of them is striving to earn a legitimate livelihood!"
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " On a warm day my father was coming from the environs of Medina, reclining on two slaves. Mohammed bin Mankandar saw him, came close to him and said,' It is a pity that at your advanced age you are striving to get worldly gains. What if the strain causes your death?' Wiping sweat from his face the Imam (a.s.) said, ' If I meet with death at this time, I shall be thankful to Allah that I died striving to provide sustenance to my children that they don't have to stretch there hands before you for help!'
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) enquired about a particular person from his companions. They replied that the person was well and busy praying night and day sitting at home. He says that his livelihood reaches him without stirring out of his house. The Imam (a.s.) said, " The person is one of those, whose prayers are not accepted!" The Imam (a.s.) inquired about another person. The companions said that he too was well and staying at home all the time busy in prayer. They also told that the person was provided livelihood by his neighbors. The prayers of this person too will not be answered. The act of the persons who provide him livelihood is more acceptable to Allah than all his prayers!"
- A jeweler asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that how a person should earn his livelihood? The Imam (a.s.) replied," he should open a shop and organize it properly. He has done what he must. The rest is in the hands of the Provider!"

THE SIXTH RAY OF LIGHT
BEAUTIFICATION, ORNAMENTATION AND NUTRITION

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says that Allah is Magnificent and likes beauty and charm. Therefore, taking care of one's own person is a good act.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that when Allah has bestowed a person with good personality, he must make it visible! He should take care of his person that the angels say, ' this is Allah's friend who is expressing gratitude to Allah by manifesting the good personality endowed to him!' If the person behaves contrary to the above, the angels would say,' The person is Allah's enemy. He is hiding his personality and is taking Allah's blessing for granted!'
- It is narrated from authentic sources that Sufian Suri saw Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) at the mosque dressed in expensive raiment. He went near the Imam (a.s.) and said, " O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! Your ancestor, the Prophet (a.s.), never wore such expensive clothes!" The Imam (a.s.) replied," Yes! That was the time when the Muslims were impecunious and the common man did not afford good

clothes. The Prophet (a.s.) didn't want to wear expenses clothes to respect the feelings of the people. Now the times have changed and the people are prosperous to afford good clothes. In these circumstances the Imam (a.s.) cannot wear sub-standard clothes!" Then the Imam (a.s.) drew Sufian Suri nearer to himself and said," Do you think I am wearing these clothes to satisfy my ego?" Then he removed his expensive clothes and showed to him the less than ordinary clothes he was wearing beneath the expensive dress, and said," This is the dress that I wear to satisfy my conscience while the outer garment is for the view of the common people." Saying this, he drew aside Sufian Suri's dress and showed him the garment he was wearing inside, that was much more expensive than the outer garment. Then the Imam (a.s.) said," This is your clothing you wear to satisfy your ego and the inexpensive clothing you wear as outer garment is to show to the people that you are frugal in your habits! This is sheer deception that people consider you a pious person!"

ABOUT ELEGANCE & ADORNMENT

When Hazrat Ali (a.s.) deputed Abdallah bin Abbas to visit the *Khawarij* (the Dissenters) to make the final presentation about the Imam (a.s.)'s authenticity (*Hujjat*), Abdallah was dressed in expensive raiment and wore fragrant perfume. He was astride a high quality steed. The Dissenters protested, " O Abdallah! Why are you dressed like the despots?" In reply Abdallah recited this verse from the Quran, " *Qul mun harrama zeenat Allahillati akhraja leibadehi wattaiybaate minalrizq- Adornment with* Halal *and pure earning is not Haram (taboo)"*

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) always used to wash new clothes before wearing them. He said," Wear decent dress and adorn yourselves with the gifts of Allah!"
- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) used to wear a robe worth five hundred and a shawl worth fifty Dinars. After the winter season he used to sell the dress and give the proceeds to the poor in alms. Similarly the dress he wore during the summers, he would sell at the end of the season and give the money to the poor and needy.
- It comes in the traditions that Allah likes people adorning themselves well. He doesn't like people to give appearance of penury and shabbiness. Someone asked the Prophet (a.s.)," How should one manifest the Blessings of Allah?" He said," Adorn yourselves with good dress, wear decent perfume, keep your dwelling clean and tidy, at sunset light a lamp in your house. This way penury and hunger escape from you. Prosperity will come to you!"

- Rabi bin Ziyad complained to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) in Basra about his brother Asim bin Ziyad that he had abandoned his children and become a recluse, dressing like a beggar! Hazrat Ali (a.s.) called Asim and told him," O enemy of your soul! The Satan has led you astray! You have no mercy on your family and children? Do you think that Allah has made His legitimate Blessings taboo (*Haram)* for you? Allah is the Greatest and would not put you to such unnecessary hardship. Therefore He says in the Holy Quran, " *walarza wa za aa ha lilaname fiha fakehatun wannaqlo zaatulakmaam"- And He made the land for His creatures which has fruits and date palms having covers over their bunches. (Sura Rahman)"* Then the Imam (a.s.) continued, " *Maraj al bahraine yaltaqyane bainahuma barzaqun layabghiyane…. Yaqruju minhumallulu wal marjaan…. (Sura Rahman)- He made two rivers flow that meet(at a confluence) They have a boundary between them from which they cannot exceed. From them pearls and oysters come out."* Using the Bounties of Allah by His creatures is dear to Him. He likes men to thank him too for His Bounties. He says, " *Wa amma benemate Rabbeka Nahaddiso (Azzuha)- and keep talking about Allah's Blessings"* Aasim said," O Imam (a.s.)! Then why do you content yourself with dried bread and coarse clothing?" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " O Aasim! I am unlike you! Allah has made it obligatory on us to live like the poor and the needy that they don't become conscious of their penury! When they see their Imam (a.s.) in that condition, they would resign to their own fates. !" Hearing this, Aasim reverted back to his former habits. If Allah has given fair means to a person, he should make good use of them for himself and help the poor and needy to the extent possible.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said that Allah will take account of three things from all the humans: firstly, the food that a person consumed, secondly, the dress that the person had used thirdly, the help the person had given to others with good intent,
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " O Abu Dharr! If Allah gives good raiment to a person, he should wear it! If He gives coarse clothing, the person should be content with it. Man should be grateful to Allah under all circumstances."

THE SEVENTH RAY OF LIGHT:
PURITY AND CLEANLINESS

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " The cleanliness of the head gets rid of the dirt from the body and gives light to the eyes. Wearing clean and tidy clothes keeps away cares and sadness from the person. It becomes a cause for the acceptance of the person's prayers. Taking regular bath and hygiene of the body keeps one in good health. People prefer the company of clean and tidy persons. Wearing a good perfume is very necessary. At least on Fridays, one should wear a good perfume. This was the tradition of the Prophets (a.s.). Our Prophet (a.s.) used to spend more on perfumes than on his personal food.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that wearing perfumes gives contentment to one's heart. He also said that one genuflection (*Rakat)* of prayer wearing a perfume is better than seventy without it..

Remember, there are plenty of traditions about the virtues of purity and cleanliness. We are contenting ourselves with the few examples quoted above.

THE EIGHTH RAY OF LIGHT
ABOUT DELICACIES

There are several traditions of the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.) about the virtues of good food. They have said that meat is the tastiest and the most nutritious of the foods. Some people wrongly feel that the Prophet (a.s.) has deprecated *Khana e pur gosht (the household that has plenty of meat).* This is a misnomer. In fact *khana e pur gosht* is an idiom that means a household where people sit and do backbiting of others. The Prophet (a.s.) definitely has deprecated this habit of people. Otherwise meat, in fact, is complete food. When a person eats meat, the flesh of his body increases and consequently his strength too enhances. He will have more energy for physical work and prayer.
Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that it is a saying of the Prophet (a.s.) that if a person doesn't eat meat for forty days at a stretch, he should borrow money to buy and eat. Meat. Allah will give him means for clearing his debt. If Allah has provided a person to eat well after meeting all his obligations, he must! Otherwise, his abstention from good food would be termed as refraining from using Allah's Bounties!

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that Allah likes people of piety. Piety is the ornament for a person. But the most important thing for a pious person is honest livelihood and good food. A pious person lives with his worldly brethren earning honest livelihood and wholesome food. The worldly people, however, cannot be in the company of the pious in the Hereafter.

Good food improves the physical strength of the bodies, which helps in the good performance of the worldly duties and spiritual prayers. If a person doesn't get proper nutrition, he might be weak and sickly and consequently unable to discharge his duties properly.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) further said that good food , fruits and beverages are allowed to be used by a person who can acquire them through fair means. However, gluttony is bad.. And excessive use of anything can have negative effect on the health of a person.

SHUNNING GOOD FOOD & MYSTIC SECLUSION

TARKE LAZAEZ WA CHILLA KASHI

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) ," This is a firm and decisive Faith! Scale its heights, but calmly! Don't put excessive weight of prayer on your bodies! Don't be like a rider who tires his animal by travelling more than it possibly can! It may fail to reach you to your destination! Satan has misguided some of our people and made them abstain from meat and other delicacies. Such abstention is against the Jurisprudence (*Shariah).* People have started calling such abstention *tasawwuf* or mysticism. They abstain from food and sit in a cave for forty days in thought of their *Pir (the master).* Since their physical and mental capabilities become dull due to abstention from food, they start getting hallucinations. They keep strengthening the thought of the master in their minds and this hallucination gets better of their rational thoughts. When they emerge from their seclusion (*Chilla kashi)* and show their condition to the *Pir,* he says that the previous night he had been to the Firmament five times and they don't feel any need for confirmation.

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " A person who offers prayers every morning with a pure heart, Allah will give him access to knowledge and wisdom!

Every transgressor (*Bidati) and the person who spreads canards about the Prophet (a.s.) and his Holy Progeny (a.s.) will be accursed.* Every action of a person should be in the way of Allah. If a person, unwittingly, perpetuates an innovation (*bidat)* with the conviction that he has done it in the way of Allah, he will be a transgressor (*Aasi).* Allah dislikes such persons.

Remember that *Chilla Kashi* is contrary to the dictates of Allah. And is an innovation. Can it be termed as a prayer if someone practices wrestling for forty days! Definitely not! This *Chilla Kashi is* contrary to the tradition of the Prophet (a.s.) quoted above about offering prayers every morning for forty days. This act of penance of the persons is a *bidat* according to the other tradition quoted.

After knowing the norms of sincerity of prayer, one will understand the futility and difficulty of the forty days' *Chilla,* which, in fact, is a sheer waste and ignorant activity. One should apply his mind to differentiate between a scholar who perpetuates knowledge and learning about Allah and the other who sinks his followers in the abyss of ignorance. Sufian Suri and Ibad Basri were persons who kept objecting to the Infallible Imams (a.s.) and creating doubts in the faith of the people.

ABOUT PROHIBITION OF MUSIC

On *Ghina* or song the opinion of all the Shia jurists is united that it is *haram* because the singer is termed a person destined for the Hell. Therefore *Ghina* is considered a major sin in Shia Islam.

Ghina is Haram in all the schools of Sunni jurisprudence too. The only exception is that of their *Sufi* cult.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that the house in which songs are heard will be the abode of misfortunes, the prayers made from there will not be answered and angels will not descend in that place. The household will be denied the Blessings of Allah.

SONG & MUSIC

Riyan bin al Salat inquired from Imam Ali Reza (a.s.), " O Imam (a.s.)! Hisham bin Ibrahim says that you have given permission to listen to music?"

The Imam (a.s.) replied, " It is a falsehood! When he asked me, I told him that someone asked Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) about music. The Imam (a.s.) replied,' If Rgiht and wrong are separated, on which side will be song and music?' The man said, ' On the side of wrong!' The Imam (a.s.) affirmed, 'You are right!'

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " Allah's Blessing will not be on a gathering assembled to listen to music. Song is the mirror of hypocrisy and the woman who sings is accursed and also those who share her earnings.
- It is recorded in *Ayoon al Akhbar ar Reza* that someone asked Imam Reza (a.s.), " What do you say about song and music?" The Imam (a.s.) replied," The people of *Hijaz* think it is legitimate. But song is taboo and is an amusement and a waste of time. Therefore Allah says in the Holy Quran," *Iza marru billagwe marru ikraman- when they pass by the vicinity of undesirable activity, they pas quietly like the merciful ones."* Whoever keeps himself away from music, will have a tree in the Heaven which, when shaken with Allah's orders, will produce musical notes that no one has ever heard. Those who had been listening to music in the world, will not have this privilege in the Heaven."
- *Ghina* has been defined by the Ulema as modulation of the voice in the throat in such a way that the listeners enjoy hearing. .
- *Ghina* is that which gets appreciation for the reciter and the listeners go into a stupor of happiness or sadness. Doing such thing is *Haram.* There are very few occasions when music is allowed. Some do not put a condition that the song should create the feeling of joy or of sadness. Because the musical notes generally has a profound effect on the heart. If a particular person takes no effect from music, then it cannot be taken as the reason for ineffectiveness of the music. For example, honey is sweet and pleasing to the taste. But if a person doesn't like the taste of the honey, it cannot be a proof against its generally accepted quality. To the contrary, the person who expresses aversion to honey

will be questioned about his taste! During the functions at the weddings, when men are not there, some people are of opinion that a *domni,* a singing-dancing girl, can entertain the ladies with her performance according to some people. Some others say that this practice is undesirable. But there is a tradition that approves of the practice.

- A person asked the Imam (a.s.), " A singing girl lives in my neighborhood. When I go to the toilet, I hear her singing. Sometimes I am attracted to the singing and purposely delay coming out of the toilet." The Imam (a.s.) asked him to avoid the practice. He said, " I don't go to the toilet with the purpose of listening to the songs. It is just that the sound comes to my ears and I listen." The Imam (a.s.) said, " Have you not heard that the ears, eyes and nose will give witness about the person's actions on the Day of Reckoning?"
- The prophet of Allah (a.s.) told to Salman e Farsi, " O Salman! In the last epoch the worst thing that would emerge will be the recitation of the Holy Quran in sing-song voices!" Also the Prophet (a.s.) said," Recite the Quran in Arabic intonation and don't recite in the tone adopted by the disobedient (*fasiq)* people because it is a major sin.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said that buying and selling singer slave girls is Haram. One who earns a livelihood from this profession is accursed.
- Some scholars have permitted singing to encourage the camels to run at good speeds while travelling. Some other scholars have permitted singing the *marsias (elegies) of Imam Hussain (a.s.).* It is better to refrain from these.
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says," Singing is one of the major sins. Allah will punish its practitioners with Hell Fire. Then the Imam (a.s.) recited the following verse from the Quran, " *Wa minannaase maineshtari lahulhadeese leyuzilla un sabeel illahe beghaire ilmin wa ettakhizaha huzuwan wa ulaieka lahum azaabun muheen (Luqman)- there are some amongst the peoplewh buy the false voice that takes them away from Allah's Way. They are ignorant and ridicule those who are steadfast on Allah's Way. For them there is stringent retribution."*
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said commenting on the following verse of the Quran," *Fajtannebuurrijsa minal autaane wa ajtanebu qaulazzoor (Al Hajj).* Here *Qaul az zoor* refers to *Ghina* or songs.

THE TENTH RAY OF LIGHT
ABOUT INVOKING ALLAH'S NAME
DHIKR ALLAH

The dictionary meaning of the word *Dhikr* is to remember. There are many ways to remember Allah. The first way of remembering Him is to give up evil habits thinking of the Almighty. The second way to remember Allah is while offering mandatory and optional prayers. The third way to remember Allah is in times when one gets legitimate worldly benefits. The fourth way of remembering Allah is in times of adversity. The fifth way of remembering Allah is through the heart, thinking of His Qualities and meanings of His Book through the interpretations given by the Holy prophet (a.s.) and the Ahl al

Bayt. The sixth way to remember Allah is through the word of mouth, invoking the true knowledge, talking of the qualities of the Ahl al Bayt, reciting the Holy Quran, reciting Allah's Names. All these invocations that come out of the tongue should emanate from the heart!

- It is narrated that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said," One who remembers Allah in quiet he remembers Allah well. The hypocrite makes the show of remembering Allah at the top of his voice. For such hypocrites Allah says, " *People do things cunningly to show off to others, they do not remember Allah but little."*
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) says that the true obedience of Allah is that He is remembered the more, despite little recourse to optional prayer viz. *Saalat* and recitation of the Quran. Sin against Allah (*Masiat)* is not remembering Allah despie over-indulgence in the rituals like optional prayers and fasting.
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) has said," Nothing hurts the Satan more than one talking about the virtues of Allah, the Prophet and his Ahl e Bayt (a.s.) to his fellowmen. The Satan then sadly complains that Allah's angels keep cursing him!
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) asked Allah that being near to Him, could he talk to Him as one does with persons near to him! Or if Allah is far away, should he talk in a loud tone that he would be audible to Him! The reply was," I am very near to those who remember me away from people in loneliness! They are My sincere creatures! Those who pretend to remember me in a loud voice to make a show of their love for me to others are hypocrites and men-of-the-world!"

LOUD INVOCATION
DIHKR E JALEE

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said," Whosoever remembers Allah quietly has so much reward that only Allah can measure it!" This proves that trying to remember Allah by making loud intonations and humming noises is against the *Shariah* and is innovation.

The *Dhikr e Jalee* of the Sufis has many other innovative practices than these. For example they sing love lyrics in loud voices and wrongly think that it is a form of worship. This practice in the *Imamiah* sect, with unanimous assent, is *Haram.* Besides these aberrations, the Sufis indulge in several undesirable acts like clapping in unison, dancing and do these things even in the solemn precincts of the Mosque. This, despite the Prophet (a.s.) exhorting his people by saying," One who recites poetry in the Mosque should be told that Allah will smash his mouth! The mosque is for reciting the Quran and not for reciting the mundane poetry!"

The Sufis generally do these activities on the eve of Friday although the eve of Friday and the day of Friday reciting couplets is a sin.

If these people are told why they act against the dictates of the Shariah, they say that they have achieved nearness to Allah. They don't realize that nearness to Allah is not possible without implicitly following the rules of Shariah. The contemptuous activities of the Sufis are termed by them as *Haal* (getting enraptured!). During *Haal* they get thought of the mundane love in their minds and in the melee of song and dance they start jumping and cavorting. Surprisingly, such scenes are common in drinking parties too!

THE SUFIS GET ENRAPTURED
THE HAAL

In the state of *Haal* the Sufis throw themselves on the ground with such artistic cunning that they don't get hurt. They pretend to abstain from the pleasures of life like eating of meat etc. They undergo a sort of penance that their bodies grow weak. The women and children of this cult too are of poor physique. But the Sufis proudly claim that they can be cured. The Sufis prohibit people crying. They curb this natural instinct that is spontaneous during times of extreme joy or sorrow. If the tears don't come off the eyes, the heart will be affected. The Sufis do not plead with Allah for amelioration of their hardship. They are under the spell of the Satan and give vent to their feelings by singing, dancing and jumping! But truly pious persons busy themselves in prayer and supplication to Allah!

THE SUFIS ARE INNOVATIVE
BIDATI

A big proof of the Sufis being innovative is that no scholar of any sect has quoted any of the Sufis of the past in their works. The prophet (a.s.) never swooned at any *Qawwali (*mystic chorus) session nor did he teach his companions to do any such thing. It is observed that very few persons recite the supplications authored by the Immaculate Imams (a.s.). To the contrary hordes of people will flock to the Qawwali meets of the Sufis and indulge in the same antics as their hosts! They do things that the Imams (a.s.)

have termed as Haram. They will have to give account of their deeds on the Day of Judgement.

- A person came to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) and said," O Imam (a.s.)! I have invented an invocation!" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Leave that aside! Recite the supplications that we have taught to you!"

THE SILENT INVOCATION
DHIKR E KHAFI

Another way of worshiping Allah is offering silent invocations. In this condition, at all times and in all circumstances, the heart of the person is bent towards Allah. The evident aspect of this type of worship is very attractive but the shape the Sufis have given to it is an innovation. There is no reference about this in Shia literature. Amongst the Sunni scribes only Maroof Karkhi has quoted from Imam Reza (a.s.). But this is doubtful because there is no evidence of Maroof having any interaction with Imam Reza (a.s.). Some say that he was a janitor at the house of the Imam (a.s.). This too is a very doubtful statement. Other people say that the teacher (*Peer e Tariqat) of Maroof was Dawood Tayee who was a bigoted Sunni.* What connection he could have had with the Imams (a.s.)! Thirdly, Maroof Karkhi's beliefs are evidenced by such unreliable persons as Noor Baksh Noor who went to the extent of claiming himself to be the Mehdi and felt that people had recognized him as that. Fourthly there are different ways of *Dhikr e Khafi.* Therefore, whichever way the *Peer* instructs the *Mureed (*the disciple) to do the *Dhikr,* it is acceptable. The fifth; Sufis consider such worship better than the mandatory prayers.. How could it be possible that the Imam (a.s.) instructed only Maroof Karkhi about this and did not tell any of his close companions! Then, if Maroof was the one and only to be instructed on this method, then why the populace is motivated to adopt the practice by the Sufis! Sixth: If the Imam (a.s.) communicated about the *Dhikr e Khafi* to Maroof in secret then there have been more pious and learned persons like Salman and Abu Dharr. There is no tradition that indicates that such companions of the Prophet (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.) have ever been instructed about the *Dhikr e Khafi.*.It is a funny situation that the Sufis leave aside thousands of authentic traditions and depend on one tradition quoted by the unauthentic Maroof Kharkhi!

RESPECT FOR THE MOSQUES

It should be remembered that Allah has termed the Mosques as his homes. Therefore, they are places where people can seek nearness to Allah. Otherwise, Allah is not restricted to any home or place. In comparison with other places, the mosque has more Favor and Blessings of Allah. Therefore it is better to offer the mandatory prayers in a mosque, preferably with a congregation. Similarly giving the *Zakat* (Religious Tax) in public is preferable. But the *Tahajjud (* late night prayer) is to be offered in loneliness.

- Reliable sources narrate from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that the Prophet (a.s.) asked Jibraeel about the portion of land that is liked by Allah. Jibraeel said, " The Mosque and the people who congregate there. More than that Allah likes the person who arrives earlier than others at the mosque and is the last to leave it!"
- It is mentioned in the Torah that Allah said," My home on the land is in the mosques. Blessed is the person who does ablution at home before coming to My Presence in the Mosque. It is necessary for him to greet those he meets at the mosque pleasantly. Tell the persons who reach the Mosque in the darkness of the night that on the Day of Reckoning their faces will be shining with light. Every place where they offered their prayers on the earth will bear witness to their piety.
- The Prophet (a.s.) has said," One who recites the Holy Quran and goes to the Mosque to offer prayers will be given a palace in the Heaven by Allah." When Allah finds a group indulging excessively in sinful acts, and if there are three men of piety in that formation, He says," O Sinners! If these three pious persons were not in your midst, who care for each other and inhabit the Mosque, every morning they supplicate to me, then I would most certainly have sent stringent Retribution to you!"
- Fadl Baqiaaq narrates that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " O Baqiaaq! Only those come to the Mosque who are the chiefs of the tribes and the heads of the families. When they return from the Mosque, they would have got at least one of the following three things: 1.The acceptance of the Prayer that would take them to the Heaven. 2. Safety from any worldly calamity for which they might have prayed. 3. Getting a brother firm in his Faith.

SWEEPING IN THE PRECINCTS OF THE MOSQUE

It is narrated that sweeping in a Mosque is equivalent to the reward for freeing a slave. When a person removes the garbage from a Mosque, Allah will Grant to him double the Reward.

- It is mentioned in the traditions that whoever sweeps the mosque on Friday eve and removes the garbage from there, Allah will forgive all his sins.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said ," Don't do any trading transactions inside the Mosque. Don't allow children (small) and mentally ill person inside the Mosque. Don't announce about a missing person or also don't raise a complaint for punishment to a criminal at the Mosque. A person who abstains from spitting inside the precincts of a Mosque, his ailments will be cured. "
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " Whoever lights a lamp in the Mosque, till that light lasts, the angels and the inhabitants of the Firmament keep praying for him!"
- Imam Al Reza (a.s.) says that once Satan went to Hazrat Yahya (a.s). Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) asked him," Will you answer a question of mine?" Satan said," Why not! I can certainly oppose you!" Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) said," Tell me, how you misguide

people?" Satan said," I shall tell you tomorrow. The next day Satan came to Hazrat Yahya (a.s) in the form of a monkey dressed in feminine garments. Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) asked him," What are all these colors?" Satan replied, " These are the different colors I use to subdue men. If one color is not effective I use the others." Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) said," Have you ever been able to subdue me?" Satan said," No! But I like your nature very much!" Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) asked in surprise," What is that?" Satan said," You eat food in a little excess and therefore you are tardy in offering prayers to Allah. You get up late for your prayer and that pleases me a lot!" Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) raised his hands towards the sky and said," O my Sustainer! Yahya (a.s.) shall not eat his fill from now onwards!"

The people who have made music and song their way of offering prayers to Allah can only be told that no Sufi, Shia or Sunni, can produce a proof that the Prophets (a.s.), the Imams (a.s.) or the Revered Companions ever had a singer or a dancer in their gatherings.

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " O Abu Dharr! *Salat* (prayer) is a pillar of the Faith! And the tongue is most respected! Whoever uses his tongue to propagate the true beliefs, the Two statements of bearing Witness (*la ilaha il Allah, Mohammed Rasool Allah)* and spreads the word of Allah is superior to any other prayer. ThereforeAllah has said in the Quran," *inassalaata tanha anilfahshae walmunkare walezikrullaheakbar- No doubt salat prevents from bad deeds and unsavory acts, but spreading Allah's word (Dhikr) is superior."*
Offering the obligatory prayers at the Mosque in congregation is attendant with more rewards. It is better to offer optional prayers in the seclusion of ones house. It is better to spend some time in the Mosque after the prayer to spread the Word of Allah. But in this, one should refrain from hypocrisy.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that three things will bitterly complain on the Day of Judgement:
1. A Mosque where no one offers prayers.
2. The scholar (*Aalim)* who lived amongst ignorant people and they had not bothered to give him attention.
3. The Quran which had been kept in the bookshelf and has taken dust because of no one reading it for long spells.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said that a person who lives in close neighborhood of a Mosque , and for no valid reason, offers his mandatory prayers at home, his prayers will not be accepted.

Any services provided to the Mosque, however small, bring high rewards to the person.

The prophet (a.s.) has said that the angels in the Heaven will pray for the person who puts lights in the mosque till that light fades off.

THE TENTH RAY OF LIGHT
CHARITY AND ALMS

There are several traditions that highlight the importance of charity and alms. We are restricting to quoting a few traditions here.

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that a Jew greeted the prophet (a.s) by saying ***assamalaik***

.(that would mean,' may death come to you'). The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " ***Alaik assaam***

(meaning,' May death come to you too!) The Companions protested to the Prophet (a.s.), " The Jew has wished for your death!" the prophet (a.s.) replied to them, " Similarly, I have wished for his death too! By this evening he will be a dead person! A snake will bite his head!" the Jew was a woodcutter. He went to the forest and returned around sunset with a stack of wood on his shoulder.

When the companions saw the Jew they informed the Prophet (a.s.) that the Jew was still alive. The prophet (a.s.) asked them to call him. The Jew came to the presence of the Prophet (a.s), who asked him to throw the stack of wood down. When the stack was put down a snake emerged from it and ran away. The Prophet (a.s.) asked the Jew, " What good deed you had done today?" the Jew said that he had two pieces of bread, of which he gave one to a beggar. The prophet (a.s.) said, the alm (*sadaqa) has saved you. That snake had brought the message of death for you. It had a sliver of wood stuck in it's mouth that prevented it from biting you.* The prophet (a.s.) then said that *sadaqa* can ward away death. If a person wants to be safe against unforeseen difficulties, he should start the day by giving a *sadaqa.*

THE REWARD FOR CHARITY & ALMS

One who wishes to ward away the evil influences of the night, he should give alms in the evening. The alms(*Sadaqa)* quench the fire of the anger of Allah.

- One day Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) went to the bank of the river. At one spot he took out bread from his basket and put in the river. His disciples asked him,:" Why did you put the only bread you had in the river?" He said, " The animals of the river will eat the bread and I shall get great rewards for the act!"
- Someone asked the Prophet of Islam (a.s.)," O prophet (a.s.)! What is a good *Sadaqa?*" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " That which you give to your nearest enemy!"

The Prophet (a.s.) added," the rewards for *Sadaqa* are ten-fold, the rewards for giving loans to the needy are eighteen times the amount, helping a Momin is twenty times and the reward for assisting ones relations is twenty fold.

- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) used to go out of his house in the nights with a bundle of breads on his shoulder to distribute to the poor. He used to hide his face during these trips that the people don't recognize who their benefactor was. Almost a hundred households depended on this nightly charity of the Imam (a.s.). . During Ramadan the Imam (a.s.) used to get the soup of goat's meat cooked in a big cauldron. He just used to smell it and then get the entire contents distributed to the poor. He himself used to break his fast with dry bread and dates.

ABOUT THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PIOUS IN THE WORLD

It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, " For great suffering, man gets equally rewarded by Allah. When Allah considers a person His friend, he puts him to severe test too. If the person confronts those hardships with patience and forbearance, he would receive Allah's Help. If the person doesn't resign to the Will of Allah, his suffering will be the more.

- Abdallah bin Bakr asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " Can a pious *Momin* ever suffer from leprosy and other serious ailments?" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Hardships are only for testing the *Momins." Then he added," Allah has taken a promise from the* momins that their wishes will not be granted in this world and their enemies will therefore not be punished here. The *momin* may have to bear several indignities in his lifetime." And said," A *Momin* will not be free of four things:
  First: He will always have a nagging neighbor.
  Second: The Satan will shadow the *momin* at every step to misguide him. .
  Third: The hypocrite will look to the chance of exposing the *momin's* faults.
  Fourth: The *momin* will have jealous people around him. This will be the most difficult aspect of a *momin's* life. The jealous would make false allegations against him and the others in the society would accept those as true.
  - The prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " Allah says,' *If it was not that I would feel ashamed of the momin, I wouldn't have left even the tattered clothes on his body. When I see that a person has become perfect in piety, I involve him in weakness and economic hardship. If he gets disheartened, I give back what was taken away from him. But if he is patient and forbearing in his suffering, I boast about him to the angels!"*
  - The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, " O Abu Dharr! The world is hell for the *momin* and heaven for the infidel- *Adduniay sijnulmomin wa jannatal kafir!*
    The higher the status of the Faith of a *momin,* the more shall be his suffering. and hardships.

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- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ Those who had maximum hardship have been the Prophets (a.s.). Then followed their Vicegerents. The hardships and sufferings have been so close to the *momins* as the rain is to the earth.” Then the Imam (a.s.) added, “ If a *momin locks himself in an invincible fort, Allah will create the instrument to cause hardship to him for the purpose of enhancing his rewards! “*
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that Allah sent two angels to the earth. They met each other halfway to the destination. One asked the other why Allah had sent him to the earth? The other asked the first, why he has been sent? The first angel said, “ In Babel a sinner has wished to have fish. I have been ordered to snare the fish towards the net of the fisherman in the Babel Sea so that the wish of that cruel person is fulfilled and he gets his heart’s fill of whatever he wants in this world only.” Then he asked the second angel,” what is your errand?” The second angel said,” I have been ordered to perform a very unusual task! A pious *momin* keeps himself busy in prayer the whole night and fasts during the days. His piety is the subject of adulation amongst the inmates of the Firmament! At this moment he has put a pot on the fire to cook his broth for breaking the fast. I have to go and turn that pot over. The purpose is that the *momin* gets closer to Allah from more hardship caused to him. !”
- Samaa Ravi narrates that a person went to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) and complained of his penury and hardship. The Imam (a.s.) said, “ Be patient! Allah shall soon give you relief!” after a while it was known that the person was an inmate of the gaol at Kufa. He said,” I have been incarcerated in a very narrow and stinking cell. “ the Imam (a.s.) said ,” The world for a *momin* is like a gaol. Then why do you crave for comfort and happiness. There are also people in this world who Allah deprives of the comforts that He sends for them. Whatever hardship comes, it comes to them!” Then the Imam (a.s.) added,” Ourselves, you and all our Shias are for facing hardships day and night!”
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said,” When Allah holds a person dear, gives him a plunge into the river of hardship. When he prays, Allah says,’ O My creature! What you have asked for, I am Omnipotent to bestow on you! I can give you more than you have asked for! But the rewards and Bounties that I have in store for you are far better than all the pleasures of the world!’”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that a *momin* doesn’t spend forty days when a new difficulty does not confront him. In fact, he is not a *momin* who is free of all worldly difficulties!”
- The Imam (a.s.) said,” A person invited the Prophet (a.s.) over a meal. When the fare was laid in the courtyard of the house, the Prophet (a.s.) looked towards the wall of the house. He noticed a pigeon has laid an egg that was resting on the top of the wall. And thus was saved. He told to the host,” Your pigeon has laid an egg that is lying safely on the top of the wall!” the man said, “O Allah’s Prophet (a.s.)! What is there to be surprised about that? I swear by the Creator, Allah, that in my entire life I have not suffered any loss!” When the Prophet (a.s.) heard this, he got up and said, “ I cannot share a meal with a person who has never suffered any loss whatsoever during his entire life! I do this because you have no contact with Allah and you don’t possess any quality. A *momin, even if he is comparatively comfortable in the world, will be in difficulty when compared*

with the comforts he would enjoy in the Hereafter! Even if a *momin* is given the entire world, the status that awaits him in the Hereafter is far superior to what is available to him in this life! In comparison this world is like the Hell for a *momin.* Similarly if an infidel is involved in all the worldly hardships, his life here will be like living in the heaven when compared with the hardships that he would bear in the Hereafter..

- Imam Hassan (a.s.), attired in expensive raiment, was riding along on a horse accompanied by his companions on steeds too! On the way an old Jewish woodcutter met him and said, " O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! Your ancestor said that the world is Hell for the *momin* and *heaven* for the *kafir.* I see that you are astride a grand Arab steed wearing expensive garments. You are enjoying comforts and I am living in sheer penury!" the Imam (a.s.) replied," If you witness my status and condition in the Hereafter, you will realize that this world is worst than a jail for me! If you witness your own position in the Hereafter, you would think that this life is like enjoying the comforts of the Heaven!"

CRYING WITH ALLAH'S FEAR

- Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) narrates that Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) asked Allah," O Allah! What is the reward for one whose eyes shed tears with Your fear?" the reply was," O Moosa (a.s.)! I shall save his face from the heat of the Hellfire and prevent him from the hardship of the Hereafter!"
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s) said," One whose eyes water with the fear of Allah, in return for every drop of his tears Allah will give him a palace in the Heaven. The palace will be decorated with pearls and precious stones."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " If the sins create such a distance between the sinner and the Heaven that will be equivalent to the distance between the Firmament and the *Taht as sara,* the person will grieve and cry that the Heaven comes close to him as the eye is to the eye-lashes! The people who cry over their sins with Allah's fear in the world, will be happy with Allah's Mercies on the Day of Judgement. Everything has a weight and measure. But a single drop of tear of compunction can cool the fire of many rivers of fire in the Hell. The face that carries the tears of remorse over the sins committed, Allah will make the Hellfire *Haram* on him. A people who have even one person who grieves and mourns, Allah will have His Mercy on the entire community!
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said, " The tears that flow with Allah's fear on the cheeks in the darkness of night, are more pleasing to Allah than anything else."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " On the Day of Judgement all the eyes will be crying excepting of three persons. One of them who closed his eyes to the

things that have been pronounced as *Haram* by Allah. Another is the person whose eyes remained open in obedience to Allah. The third person is that whose eyes shed tears with fear of Allah in the nights."

- Ishaq bin Ammar narrates that he told to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) , " O Imam (a.s.)! I want to cry but tears don't come out! Many a time I try to remember the dead of my kith and kin thinking that it might give vent to my tears. Is it legitimate to do this? The Imam (a.s.) said, " It is legitimate! But when you start crying get busy remembering Allah!" The Imam (a.s.) said at another occasion, " If you are unable to cry, put your thoughts on it! Even if you get a tear as small as a fly, it will be good for you!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said once, " When you have any fear or you have a wish to make, then first praise Allah. Then call for peace on the Prophet (a.s.) and his Ahl e Bayt (a.s.). Then submit to Allah for His Mercies! Man will be closest to Allah when he has his head in the prostration of prayer and is crying for His Help."
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " O Abu Dharr! Seven persons will be such that Allah will give them place in His Firmament on the Day of Judgement. They will be:
  1. The Just Imam (*Imam e Adil)*
  2. The truthful youth.
  3. The person who does charity hidden from others.
  4. One who remembers Allah in seclusion.
  5. One who makes friends with *momins* to please Allah.
  6. One who emerges from the Mosque thinking that he would return to it again.
  7. One whom a beautiful woman tries to entice, but he says with Allah's Fear that he is afraid and fearful.

"O Abu Dharr! Allah said,' I shall not have two fears with my creatures at the same time. One who fears me in the World , I shall have him fearless in the Hereafter. The one who is not afraid of Me in the world, I shall frighten him on the Day of Judgement!'"

The innumerable admonitions and advises that the Prophet (a.s.) made to Abu Dharr have some lessons for the people. These are dealt at some length in the next chapter.

CHAPTER : 10

THE FRUITS

THE FIRST FRUIT:
ABOUT FEAR AND HOPE
KHAUF WA RAJA

A *momin* is recognized by two essential traits—he has fear of Allah and hopes for His rewards in moderation. The *momin* neither spends all his life in acute fear of Allah's retribution, nor has he excessive hopes of rewards! One has to bear in mind that both these excesses are sins!

Ruja means carrying hope of Allah's Mercy. A person who expects *ruja* but continues with his sinful acts will be a hypocrite of the highest order. This will be tantamount to not planting the saplings in the soil and expecting to reap the fruits.

Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) says, " O my Lord! When my attention goes to my sins, I become fearful of retribution, but I am also hopeful of Your Mercy and Forbearance!"

Hazrat Luqman (a.s.) advised his son, " O my son! Even if your good deeds are more than those of all men and jinn put together, you must fear Allah that you might attract His retribution. Even if your sins are more than all the sins of men and jinn, you must hope that Allah will have mercy on you! But hoping for rewards, one must strive to earn them! The faith of a *momin* is not complete unless he develops the twin traits of *khauf and ruja* in himself!"

Allah is just and He cannot do injustice to His creatures. The rewards therefore will be commensurate with the good deeds of the individual. It is believed that Allah will reward a person ten times more than his good deeds. Allah will punish a person who is proud of his piety and reward a pious person who is humble in his piety!

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " O Ishaq! You must have fear of Allah as if you are in His presence! If you are not seeing Him, certainly He is seeing you! If you have a doubt that Allah is not seeing you, you are an infidel! When you have the conviction that Allah sees you all the time and even then continue with your sinful acts, then it will be tantamount to feeling that He is the weakest in whose presence you can commit sins with impunity!"
- Another tradition says that people fear him who fears Allah. He who has no fear of Allah, is afraid of everything else around him! The conscience of one who has fear of Allah will not be attracted towards the wordly things.

- The Prophet of Islam (a.s). has said,” One who is attracted towards sin and lechery but shuns them because of the fear of Allah, then he will be pardoned by Allah and saved from the Hellfire!”

THE SECOND FRUIT:
SOME TALES

- Mohammed Yakub Kulaini quotes from Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) that some people were sailing in a boat when it toppled in a storm. Only one woman survived by hanging on to a wooden plank that kept afloat. She landed in an island where she met a sinful person. When he saw the woman the evil desires rose in his mind. The woman cried and begged him to spare her the ignominy. The man told her why she was so scared of anyone in that lonely place. The woman raised her hand towards the sky and said, “ I am afraid of my Allah!” The evil person asked her, “ Have you never done such an act?” The woman replied, “ By Allah! I have never committed such a sin!” The man thought that the woman was chaste and he had himself committed umpteen sins. Therefore he thought that he must be more fearful of Allah. With this thought he left the woman unmolested and went away in one direction. On the way a hermit joined him on the journey. The heat of the sun was excessive and the hermit asked him to pray that a cloud shadowed their heads to provide them some relief from the sunlight. The man said that he had been sinner all his life and his prayers may not be answered! The hermit said that he would himself pray and the man should say, ’Aameen!’ The hermit therefore prayed and the sinner said, ‘Aameen’. The prayer was answered and a cloud appeared over their heads. After a while they reached a place from where the hermit had to go in a different direction. When the hermit went his way, the cloud followed the sinner giving him the shade! The hermit said, “ O youth! What is it that my prayer was not answered and your prayer was?” The man recounted his experience to the hermit. The hermit said, “ Allah is pleased with you! Try to earn His pleasure in the future!.”

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that there was once a courtier of a king of the Bani Israel. The king was very kind on this person. The king once told him that he wanted a wise and judicious person to be deputed to another kingdom for some important errand.

The courtier had a brother whose spouse was very pretty. The courtier had an evil eye on the woman and was looking for an opportunity to molest her. He told to the king that his brother would be ideal to perform his errand. The king liked the suggestion and called the person to his presence. The courtier told his brother that it was the best chance for him to earn the king’s favor by performing his important task. The brother mentioned about the matter to his wife who happened to be a scion of a prophet (a.s.)’s family. She was a woman of piety

and objected to remaining alone in the absence of her husband. She asked her husband to make an excuse to the king and refuse the assignment. But the man didn't agree and went away on the king's errand.

The courtier took advantage of the loneliness and helplessness of his brother's wife and started to seduce her. The woman was adamantly chaste. The courtier said that if the woman didn't respond to his advances, he would involve her in a false case of adultery and get her killed by public stoning. Even then the woman didn't budge an inch. The courtier went to the king and appealed to him to punish the woman for adultery. The woman was stoned and was given for dead. But the woman was, in fact, not dead. The whole night she remained at the ground where she was stoned. In the morning she managed to reach herself to a nearby hermitage. The hermit took pity on her, gave her food and treated the wounds. The woman recovered completely. The hermit had a son whom he loved dearly. The woman was entrusted to take care of the son. The hermit had a slave who got enamored of the woman. Despite all his overtures, he was unable to win over the woman. When all his subterfuges failed, he killed the hermit's son and put the blame for the murder on the woman. The hermit was very sad. But he was a kind person. Instead of punishing the woman, he gave her some money and ordered her out of the hermitage.

The woman was travelling forlornly in her loneliness when she found some persons cuffing a man. She went near them and asked the reason for the punishment. They said that the man owed them some money and was not paying it back. The woman took pity on the person and settled his debt from the money the hermit had given her. The man was therefore released and he accompanied her on the way. They were going along the bank of a river when they noticed some people sitting at a distance. The man asked her to wait for a while that he would go and inquire about them. He went to the persons and found that they were itinerant traders. He told them that he had a very pretty slave girl for sale. One of the traders went with the person to the woman and liked her. The deal was struck for the sale. The man took the money and left the woman with the traders. However much the woman tried to convince the men that she was not a slave, they didn't agree. Looking at the fair appearance of the woman, every trader claimed that she would be his companion.

At the time of departure they had two boats. They decided that they would board one boat and the second would carry their merchandise and the woman. They therefore set sail. On the way they came across a storm and the boat carrying the men sank with all the merchants aboard. The other boat, with the woman and the merchandise, reached a place on the coast safely. The woman found that the place had a beautiful garden that had no human being on it. There was also a well-appointed mansion in the garden, as if ready to receive its inmates. The pious woman started living there and busied herself in prayers. The prophet (a.s.) of the time was ordered by Allah to go to the king and ask him to seek the pardon of a person living at a particular garden in an island for the unjust

punishment inflicted on her. The king reached the place after some search. He found that it was a beautiful garden and the woman was busy offering prayer in seclusion. The king told her that he was asked by a prophet (a.s.) of the Bani Israel to approach her and seek her pardon for the unjust punishment inflicted on her. The woman said that she had a condition for pardoning him. She asked him to bring certain persons to her presence.

The king came back to the woman with the persons she had asked him to bring along. She told him that he should make a promise that he wouldn’t order stoning of anyone in future without fully establishing the reason for such a harsh punishment. The king was repentant and was therefore pardoned. Then she asked the courtier, her husband’s brother, to seek Allah’s pardon. He shed tears of remorse and she forgave him. She pardoned the hermit’s slave too. She called the man who sold her as a slave and forgave his fault. In the end she called her husband and told him her experiences. She told him that from that day neither she was his spouse nor he her husband. She indicated to him that a boat full of riches was on the coast. She also told him that since he had avarice for riches, he could take all that and go his way. She asked him and the rest of the party to leave her alone to her prayers!

- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) narrates,” In the tribe of Bani Israel a person was known as a thief of the shrouds of dead persons. One of his neighbors got seriously ill and was afraid that when he died, the person will dig his grave to steal the shroud. He called the person and presented to him a shroud and requested him not to open his grave for the purpose. In the beginning the thief was a little reluctant. But ultimately he yielded and took one of the two shrouds. After some days the neighbor died. The thief thought that the person is already dead and there is no chance of his knowing that he had stolen his second shroud. Therefore in the darkness of the night he entered the graveyard. After sometime the thief too was seriously ill. He now had pangs of remorse that he had broken a serious promise made to his neighbor. He called his sons and told them that when he was dead he should be burnt to the last vestige of the bones and the ashes thrown into the river. This way he would be spared of presenting himself before Allah on the Day of Judgement. The person died and his son fulfilled his last wish. Allah issued orders for the man's ashes to reassemble and come back alive. Thus the thief was alive once again and Allah asked him about why he took such a step as to getting his cadaver burned? The man replied that he did that out of Allah’s fear. A herald called, “ Your penitence has earned you pardon!”
- Ibne Babawiyah narrates that the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) was sitting one day in the shade of a tree. A person then came, and removing his robe from his body started rolling on the ground. The man repeatedly lamented,” O Conscience! Taste this hardship! The hardship of the Doomsday shall be much more severe”. The Prophet (a.s.) looked at him and said, “ What is it that is forcing you to behave the way you are behaving?” The man said, “ It is only the fear of Allah and the call of the conscience!” The Prophet (a.s.)

said, “ Allah is praising you for this act to the angels and has pardoned all your past sins!”

- It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) that three persons were travelling together. On the way they took shelter in a cave because of cyclonic rain. With severe rain and wind a big boulder slided down the hill and blocked the mouth of the cave. The persons were very worried. They knew that there was no escape for them and that they should pray for Allah’s help recalling their best acts of virtue. One of the three persons raised his hands to the Heaven and said, " O Sustainer of people! I engaged a worker fixing a measure of rice for his labors. He finished the work but left without taking the wage. I sowed that quantity of seed, took the crop and bought cows from the proceeds. When the worker came claiming his wages, I offered him the cows. He refused to accept them and said that he wanted the measure of rice agreed to between them. I told him that the cows were bought from the returns obtained from his measure of rice. With difficulty the worker agreed to take the cows. I did all this with Allah’s fear in my heart. If this act of mine is acceptable to Allah, He will remove the boulder from the mouth of the cave!” The boulder moved a little. The second traveler said, “ O Allah! You know well that one night I took food for my parents when they were already asleep. I thought it well not to disturb their sleep and abided near them all the night. If this act of obedience and love of my parents is acceptable to you, please remove the boulder from the mouth of the cave!” The boulder moved away a little more from the mouth of the cave. The third person cried and said,” O Allah! It happened one night. I was deeply in love with a cousin of mine. When I expressed my wish to her, she demanded a huge sum of money from me in return. When I gave her the sum and the time for fulfilling my desire came, she said, ‘ O cruel person! You are not afraid of Allah! You are trying to open a closed door without permission! ‘ When she said this, I had pangs of remorse and refrained from the nefarious act. O Allah! If you have liked my remorse, repentance and compunction, do remove the boulder from the mouth of the cave!’ No sooner the person completed his prayer, the boulder slid away from the mouth of the cave!”
- Klein narrates from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that one day Hazrat Ali (a.s.) was sitting with his companions when a person came and said, “ O Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)! I have committed a foul act with a boy. Please make a pronouncement against me!” Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ Go away from here! Are you mad!” The man was adamant and raised the same call four times. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ You are a self confessed criminal! The Prophet (a.s.) has ordered three punishments for such crimes. !) Beheading with a sword. 2) Tying of the limbs with rope and throwing from the top of a hill. 3) Burning the person. Now tell me which of the punishments you would prefer. The man asked, “ Which punishment is the most severe!” Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ Getting burnt alive is the most severe!” The man cried and said, ‘ I would like to be burnt alive!” A fire was lighted in a ditch and the man went crying toward it. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) too cried in sympathy with the man and

said," You have made the angels in the Firmament cry for you! Allah in his Munificence has pardoned you!"

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that in the tribe of Bani Israel there was a girl so pretty that some youth said that the determination of the most pious person of the time would falter setting eyes on her. The woman wanted to prove if the young men were right. She went to the pious person's house and knocked at his door. When the person saw it was a woman, he didn't permit her to enter the house. She bluffed him saying that if he didn't give her shelter, she might be molested by some youths chasing her. Hearing this the pious man allowed her to enter the house. The woman removed her shawl from her face. He raised his hand towards her and immediately drew it away in remorse. There was a cauldron on fire lit for cooking something. The pious man put his hand into the fire. The woman ran out crying, " The pious person is burning his own hand!" Men came running but the man had already burnt his hand!
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that a woman was a guest at the place of a pious person. In the night the Satan misguided the pious man. In order to control his desire the man burned one of his fingers. When the foul desires cropped up again, the man burnt another finger of his. By the morning the pious persons burnt all his fingers. Then he told to the woman, " Go now! May Allah save me from a guest like you!"

THE LAMENT OF HAZRAT YAHYA

It is narrated from The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) had propensity for piety from his very childhood. He used to go to the *Bayt al Muqdis* and look at the hermits in prayer, wearing dress made of hair and wool tying their locks to the pillars of the building. He asked his mother to make for him similar dress that he could join the other people in prayer.

The mother asked Yahya (a.s.) to be patient till his father, the Prophet Zakaria (a.s.) arrived, that they consult him before arranging the ceremonial dress for him.

When Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) arrived, he was consulted. He told to Yahya (a.s.), " You are still a child! Why do you have the intention of joining the ranks of hermits?" He replied, " O father! You are observing, death doesn't spare even children younger than me. How could I wait for what I wish to do?"

Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) told to his wife, " Give the child what he wishes to have!"

Therefore Yahya (a.s.)'s mother got a dress and topee of hair made for him. Wearing these he went to *Bayt al Muqdis* and busied himself in prayer with the other hermits.
One day Yahya (a.s.) noticed that his body was bruised with the rubbing of the dress made of the hard hair. He cried.

The voice of a herald came ," O Yahya (a.s.)! Are you crying because your body is bruised and has become emaciated? By My Glory! If you set eyes on the Hell you might condescend to wear the dress of steel!"

Hearing this, Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) cried so much that his cheeks became gory, the flesh fell and the teeth were exposed. When his mother heard about his condition, she came running to him and asked," My son! What condition you have rendered yourself to?"

Then his father said, " Why are you doing like this? I had offered special prayers to Allah to get a son! But I find that you are trying to depart from me."

Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) said, " O father! Once, while delivering a sermon you had said that between the Heaven and the Hell there is a ravine. Only those who cry in remembrance of Allah will be able to successfully negotiate safely through that ravine. "

Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) said, " No doubt, it is true! But you are still a tender child! One certainly has to put in lot of effort in praying to Allah. You too are under obligation in this matter as the others are!"

His mother said, " If you wish I can make two cushions for your cheeks that the pain to the wounds is subdued and your teeth remain covered. The tears too will be absorbed by these cushions."

Yahya (a.s.) replied," O mother! You are at liberty to do what you wish to do!"

Therefore his mother prepared two soft cushions and tied them on the cheeks of Yahya (a.s.). Then she noticed both the sleeves of the dress were drenched in tears. When she squeezed the sleeves, water fell through her clenched fingers.

Noticing this, Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) raised his arms towards the Heaven and said, " O Allah! This son I had prayed to you for giving me! You are the Most Beneficent Lord! Be kind on him!" Afterwards, whenever Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) gave a sermon, he used to ensure that Yahya (a.s.) was not around. In his presence he refrained from talking about the Heaven and the Hell!

One day Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) was busy delivering a sermon when Yahya (a.s.), wearing a shawl came and sat with the congregation. Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) was not aware of his presence. He said that Jibrael had informed him that there is a

mountain in the Hell that is called *Sukran*. There is a valley at the foot of this mount called *Ghazban*. In this valley there is a well the depth of which is equivalent to travelling for a full hundred years. In the well there are sarcophagi of fire. In these sarcophagi there are chests of fire. In these chests there are dresses of fire, collars and chains of fire that would be put round the necks and bodies of the sinners on the Day of Judgement!

Hearing this, Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) shouted, " *Wa agfalnaaho"* and took a deep sigh! Then he rose and quietly walked away to the forest. Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) returned home after the sermon was finished. He told to Yahya (a.s.)'s mother, " Go and search for Yahya (a.s.). After hearing me talk about the Hell he has gone into the forest.' The mother came out crying and asked people if they had seen her son. After traversing a long distance she met a shepherd. He said a youth of the description given by her was seen by him sitting in a cave and crying. He had cried so much that his feet were covered in tears. The shepherd said that the youth was crying, " O Allah! I shall not drink cool water until You show me my place of rest in the Hereafter!"

Yahya (a.s.)'s mother reached that cave and embraced Yahya (a.s.). She told him, " O son! Remove this dress of hard hair that there are bruises on your body. Wear soft dress of *Pashmina wool. "*

Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) agreed to change his dress. The mother cooked lentils for him. He ate his fill and slept. He slept so long that the time for the obligatory prayer was past. A voice then called, " O Yahya (a.s.)! You like this abode more than ours! You want a better neighbor than Us?"

Yahya (a.s.) rose from his sleep suddenly and looked towards the sky. He said, O Creator! I don't consider any place more than the *Bayt al Muqdis!*" Then he asked his mother to give to him the dress of hair, wore it and prepared to go to *Bayt al Muqdis.* He didn't stop, however much his mother persuaded him not to go.

Hazrat Zakaria (a.s.) told to the mother of Yahya (a.s), " He will not stop with your persuasion! Let him go. The curtain has been removed from his heart! The comforts of this world are nothing for him!"

Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) reached the *Bayt al Muqdis* and got busy in his prayers!

THE PRAYER OF THE CHIEF OF IMAMS HAZRAT ALI

Ibne Babawiyah has quoted from Urwa bin Zubair that one day they were assembled in the Prophet (a.s.)'s Mosque. The topic of discussion was the prayers of the people of *Badr* and *Baiath e Ridhwan.* Abu Darda said," Gentlemen! I am telling about an august personality who had less worldly wealth than other Companions of the Prophet (a.s.) but was the most superior in piety and prayer.. The gathering wondered who could this personage be? Abu Darda then said, " It was Ali ibne Abi Talib (a.s.)!" Hearing this they turned away their faces! From the group of Ansar a person said, " Why did you broach a discussion that no one here likes?"Abu Darda said, " I have said what I had seen! One night I went to the oasis of Bani Najjar. There I heard that behind the trees someone was saying prayer in a tone full of pathos,' O Allah! You are so Merciful that despite seeing the innumerable sins of your creatures You have bestowed on them uncountable Blessings! We humans commit such unpardonable misdeeds but You don't shame us! O Allah! The entire life was spent in difficulties. Our List of Deeds
(*Nama e Aamaal*) is predominantly filled with mention of the sins committed! Now we seek Deliverance from You! We don't seek anything other than Your Pleasure!' Hearing this I moved closer. I noticed that it was Ali Ibne abi Talib (a.s.). I kept watching his supplication. After the supplication he offered several genuflections(*Rakaat*) of prayer. He then continued his beseeching to Allah, ' When I look at Your Great Deliverance, the sins of humans appear trivial to me! When I look at Your Stringent Retribution I feel that the men have committed gravest of sins! Oh! We humans have forgotten lot of sins committed by us. But You have the exact account of everyone's deeds! With Your Orders the angels would review them! What will be the position of men who will not have the assistance of their next of kin, they will not be able to hear the pleadings of these men! What severe fire will be there that it would burn the very entrails of the persons! In the Hell it would be like a river of fire!' Saying this Hazrat Ali (a.s.) cried with intensity and then his voice choked. I thought that it was late night and he might have fallen asleep. When it was almost time for the *Fajr* prayer I went near him to wake him up for the prayer. I called him several times but didn't get any reply. I touched him and found his body as motionless as the dry timber. Reciting *Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi rajeoon* I rushed to Hazrat Ali (a.s.)'s house. I told Hazrat Fatima (a.s.) about her husband's condition. She said, ' O Abu Darda! Don't be astonished! Abul Hassan (a.s.) will be in such a state many a time when he supplicates to Allah!' I took some water to where Hazrat Ali (a.s.) was lying and revived him with a few splashes of the water. He said, ' O Abu Darda! Why are you worried and crying?' I said,' I worried seeing your condition!' He said,' What will be your condition if you see the angels take you

for accounting of your deeds in front of Allah and surrounded on all sides by the angels with ferocious faces. No friend will come near you at that time. The people of the Firmament will take pity on you! O Abu Darda! Only the Allah's favored persons will have pity on you!' Abu Darda says, " By Allah! I never saw any other Companion of the Prophet so intense in prayer and fearful of Allah!"

THE THIRD FRUIT
CONFRONTING THE PSYCHE

One's baser self (*Nafs e ammara*) is more damaging than even the influence of the Satan! One who is able to control his baser instincts for the fear of the Day of Judgement, will be eligible for entry to the Heaven. On the Day of Judgement Satan would tell those who were misguided by him," Was I your monarch that you obeyed my orders? Why do you blame me? Blame your own baser self! " Fighting with Satan and *Nafs e Ammara* is more than confronting mortal enemies in Jihad! The Jihad of the psyche (*Mujaheda e nafs)* is keeping away from the baser urges of the mind for doing things that are contrary to the norms of *Shariah.*

- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) narrates that the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) sent his men for Jehad. When they returned, he said," I am happy, you have accomplished the *Minor Jehad* . Now you have to make the *Major Jehad*!" The people asked, " What is the Major jehad?" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " The biggest Jehad is the struggle against one's baser instincts (*Jehad e Nafs)."*
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that the Prophet (a.s.) said to Abu Dharr, " O Abu Dharr! Allah has not created any Prophet (a.s.) but for teaching his people to be honest, pious, righteous, truthful and punctual in offering prayers. But the most important thing for them is their behavior with the fellow human beings. If they are right in this, they will earn their place in the Heaven. When a person entrusts his valuables to another, Satan will have an opportunity to influence the mind of the person who has the trust of the valuables! If the man resists Satan's temptations, it is *Jehad e Nafs*! This Jehad is more valuable than the Jehad with weapons!" " O Abu Dharr! If a person tortures his own psyche by doing undesirable things harmful to his own person, Allah might punish or forgive him! But the injustice that a person does to other humans is not at all pardonable in the eyes of Allah!" " O Abu Dharr! There are three types of tyranny (*Zulm).* The first type is pardonable in the eyes of Allah. Here a person inflicts it on himself because of his baser instincts. The second type of tyranny is that which Allah never forgives. Here a person adopts polytheistic tendencies. The third type of tyranny or injustice is that which is caussed by a person to fellow human beings. This sin is not pardonable in the eyes of Allah!"

THE FOURTH FRUIT
CENSURING THE WORLD

Any person with average intelligence knows that this transient world is not worth getting attached to! But Satan presents the world to people with false embellishments and puts curtains on their eyes that they are not able to see the actual facts. Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) had said that Allah has accumulated all the virtues in a vault and its key is in the hands of piety. Whoever wishes to be virtuous, he must adopt piety.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that if a person wishes to acquire the Rewards of the Hereafter, then he must shun the world. The pious (*Zahed)* should be aware that by shunning the world it doesn't mean that there will be any reduction in the rightful blessings that are in store for him. In fact, however much a person seeks the world, there will not be any increase in the wordily benefits that are his destiny.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.), during a journey, passed by a mosque. The time for prayer was nigh. Therefore he dismounted from his horse. One person was standing there. He asked him to hold the reins of the horse for the time he offered prayer and returned. When Hazrat Ali (a.s.) came out after the prayer he found that the horse was standing alone and the man had gone away with the rein. He put back the two dirhams in his pocket that he had in his hand to give to the man. He mounted the horse and returned home. He gave two dirhams to Qambar, his slave, and asked him to buy a set of reins. Qanbar went to the saddler and was surprised to see their own reins hanging in the shop. When he inquired how the reins came there, he was told that a person came there and sold it for two dirhams. Qanbar gave two dirhams to the shop owner and retrieved the reins. When Qambar reached home with the reins, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) told him, " From where you got this and how much you paid for it?" Qambar replied that he got it from the saddler on payment of two dirhams. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " How unfortunate was the person who left behind the legitimate benefit and ran away with illegitimate!

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that the Prophet (a.s.) was sitting in the mosque one day in slightly disturbed mood. At that moment the angel came with a message from Allah," O My friend and Messenger! Takes these keys to the riches of the world. Spend as much of them as you wish! The treasures of the world have no value when compared to your happiness!" The Prophet (a.s.) told to the angel," Tell Allah on my behalf that the world is for those who don't have a home in the Hereafter!"

- In another tradition it is said that the Prophet (a.s.) was once walking on the street when he noticed a dead lamb rotting on a garbage dump. He asked his companions, " What will be the value of this animal?" They replied, " If it was alive, it wouldn't be worth more than a dirham." The Prophet (a.s.) said, " By Allah! The world for me is not worth more than that dead lamb!" " Think of the world as an inn where you are stopping for a little time. The worldly wealth is like a dream. When the eyes open, there would be nothing around to see!"
- Hazrat Abu Dharr said , " O seekers of knowledge and wisdom! Don't be attached to wealth and your off-springs! One day you will have to leave them behind! You are like a guest in this world. You are here today and your destination will be different tomorrow!"
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " Don't seek more riches. Excess of riches will result in excessive sins. A clever person is one who distinguishes the difference between the transient and immortal. Shun the transitory world. Love for the world will make one forget his duties to Allah. O seekers of the world! You are running after it, but it will throw you out! Those who are proud of the worldly gains, will be soon engulfed with difficulties. Those who have gone from here , have never returned! Those who remain , never know when they will depart. It's pleasures and pains are uncertain. Don't count on your age , every thing will transit sooner or later! When it gives fame to a person, it can soon give him infamy! It has caused ridicule to it's monarchs! The life in this world is always awaiting death! Have you not heard of the people before you? .How rich and respected they were in their days! Some were the kings and others were courtiers! But when the time to depart came around, none could help them! Do you love such a place and the people inhabiting it!? Don't attach your hearts to the world!"
- Ibne Babawiah narrates that whenever the Prophet (a.s.) returned from his journeys, he would first go to the house of Hazrat Fatima (a.s.). Once when he returned from a trip and went to Hazrat Fatima (a.s.)'s house, he noticed an expensive curtain hanging on the door. He also saw two earrings adorning her daughter's ears. The Prophet (a.s.) suddenly departed without talking to her. Hazrat Fatima (a.s.) understood why her father was upset. She removed the curtain from the door and sent along with the earrings to the Prophet (a.s.) requesting him to sell them and give away the proceeds in charity. Seeing the ear-rings and the curtain the Prophet (a.s.) said thrice," My daughter! May your father be sacrificed on you! You have gauged the feelings of your father! The world is not for Mohammed (a.s.) and his progeny! If the world was worth a fly's feather in Allah's eyes, he wouldn't have given a gulp of water from it to the infidels!"
- It is narrated from Hazrat Ali (a.s.) that one day he was irrigating an orchard when a very beautiful woman came and said," O son of Abu Talib! If you consent to marry me, I shall give you the secret treasures of the world that you will be spared of the hard labor that you do!" Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked, " Who are you and what is your name?" She replied, " I am the world!" He said," Run away! This implement I hold in my hands is worth much more than all your treasures!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said that the love for the world is the root of all the troubles. One who doesn't value the world very much, is the man of wisdom!

THE FIFTH FRUIT
WHAT THE WORLD MEANS

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says, ‘ A person who seeks the world is like the silk-worm which becomes more and more incarcerated inside the cocoon the more silk it wounds around and dies inside it. A seeker of the world is like the sheep that ventures into the grassland to feed. It fattens, and the same fattening becomes the cause of its death under the butcher’s knife! Remember, when you go before Allah, four questions will be asked:

- How did you spend your youth?
- What work you did during your lifetime?
- From where you acquired the riches?
- Where did you spend your wealth?

Prepare your replies to these questions. “

The more you seek the world, the more will be the desire to have it. It is like the thirsty drinking the water from *Dariya e Shor* (a river). The more he drinks the water, the more thirsty he feels!.

The exterior of the world is very attractive and in fact it is very destructive! It looks pretty like a snake, soft and cuddly! But its nature is venomous! The wise keeps an eye on its venom and escape from it. The gullible plays with it like a child!

This world is transient! The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, “ The world is like a tree for men to have a respite under it’s shadow and depart!”

ABOUT THE UNGRATEFULNESS OF THE WORLD

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) narrates that the world came one day, smartly dressed, to Hazrat Eeesa (a.s.) and said, “ O Eeesa bin Mariam (a.s.)! Marry me!

- Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) said, “ Did you ever marry anyone else?”
- It said, “ I married thousands!”
- Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) asked, “ Did they all divorce you?”
- It said, “ No! I killed them all!”
- Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) said, “ Who will marry you that you have killed thousands of your husbands!”

THE WAY TO GET RELIEF FROM THE WORLD

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) narrates that Hazrat Luqman (a.s.) advised his son that the world is a deep ocean that has drowned thousands. Therefore, seek the way of deliverance. Prepare the boat of piety and fill it with good deeds. Make contentment the sail of your boat. Make your wisdom the navigator, knowledge the guide and patience the anchor!"

FUTILITY OF THE WORLD

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) said, " This world is like a building that has a very low roof. If one raises his head, he gets hurt. If one keeps his head low, he will pass away peacefully!"

THE SAD END OF THE WORLD

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " The world is like a delicacy. When consumed in excess, it causes pain in the tummy!"

THE WORLD AND THE HEREAFTER CANNOT COME TOGETHER

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " A man of the world is like a person who walks on water and wants that his feet don't get wet!"

To highlight the defects of the world we narrate in some detail:

THE TALE OF BALOHAR & YUZASAF.

Ibne Babawiah narrates from Mohammed bin Zakaria that in the realm of India there was a king who had sway over large areas and populations! He was fond of all carnal pleasures. He preferred the company of sycophants. He hated those who gave sound advice. But, despite all these, he excelled in governance and control of the affairs of the state. All his subjects were obedient to the last man. With power and pelf, his psyche was flying high! He was fully engrossed with his world of sins and pleasures! The praises of

the sycophants had made him more conceited! The king lacked only one thing. He had no son and successor to his crown!

The Satan, taking pleasure from the ways of the king, egged him on to the heights of sinful ways! He hated the pious persons. Idolatry was rampant in his realm. One day he asked people about a person who was considered the wisest in the realm. He asked them about the activities of the person and told that he had an important task for the person. He was told, " Your Majesty! The person is so sick of the world that he never stirs out of his house!" Hearing this, the king was very angry. And ordered his men to bring the man urgently to him.

The king, when the man was brought to him, tried much to convince him to agree to adopt the ways desired by the king. When the man refused to acquiesce to the king's suggestions, the king asked him," Who has advised you to be a recluse?" The man replied, " My conscience!" The king said, " Your conscience has killed you! I therefore want to give a punishment to your conscience that is meted out to a murderer! " The man said, " I have very high expectations from your wisdom that you will not make a verdict between us by yourself but you will appoint a sagacious judge whose verdict would satisfy me!" The king asked, " Tell me! Who could that judge be?" The man said, " I can depend on your own wisdom for a fair judgement!" The king now said, " Tell me, what you wish to say!"

The man said, " I have heard a wise person say that a foolish person thinks that a useless thing is very valuable and neglects the things that have real value. Then he acquires and adopts the useless things. When I heard this, I started running away from the most worthless thing, this world! Now, in my view life is in death! Every thing including property, health, illness, fame, power and pelf is just a transit towards death. O King! This world is to be pitied! It makes a person the master and makes the same person a servant! It makes a person smile and the very next moment forces him to cry!

O King! You have said that shunning the world I have hurt my conscience and caused hardship to my dependents! It is, in fact, contrary to what you think. It is for their love that I have put away wrong desires and wishes. Now I can identify friends from foes!

O king! Among the horde of sycophants around you, none is your loyal friend! Everyone is after power and riches! If this realm, the wealth and power is not with you, then you will not get any response from them. The way I live, all the inmates of my surroundings are my friends. Whatever I do, they follow suit. Whatever I say, they say too. I have not shunned the world at the spur of a moment! I have done it after deep thought!

I hope , O King, you will also benefit from my humble thoughts. The king was furious hearing this advice from the man. The king ordered the person to be exiled from his kingdom. He said that the person was misguided and was also misguiding his subjects in general.

Around that time a male child was born to the king. He was so overjoyed that he was close to dying with happiness overwhelming him! He was convinced that the child was the reward for his idolatry. He spent the entire wealth in the treasury on pomp and show. He ordered general celebration in the realm for one year. He named his son as Yuzasaf. He ordered all the astrologers in the country to the court and to make their predictions about the child's future. Excepting one astrologer, the rest predicted that the child would be superior in wealth and fame in comparison to all the children born in that period. But the only astrologer, who was held in very high esteem by the king for his expertise, predicted that the child will not only be superior in his wisdom but he will excel in nobility and piety. In fact he would be the chief of pious people in the realm.

Hearing this, the king became a little sad. He started planning to keep the child away from getting exposure to piety. He ordered a big mansion to be constructed where the child would live with a selected few companions. It was strictly ordered that there should not be any talk of death or the Hereafter in his presence. He was not to hear anything about religion or piety. To ensure the risk of his getting exposed to piety, all the pious persons from the realm were banished to other countries. One of the ministers of the king was very wise and tactful. The king used to depend on his advice in important matters. The other courtiers were jealous of this minister for the favor he received from the king. One day the king went out hunting. The minister too was in his company. On the way the minister noticed a grand old man lying severely injured on a boulder. On inquiry, the old man said that the wild animals had mangled him. The minister took pity on his condition. The man said to the minister that if he saved his life, he too would be of help to him sometime in the future. The minister said that even if the man was unable to help him in the future, it was his own humane duty to come to the rescue now. The minister however asked him what sort of great help he was capable of rendering in the future. The man said that he had the skill to mend affairs that go wrong and bring back things into control. The minister didn't pay any heed to what the man said. However, he brought the man home and got him properly treated and restored to health.

A time came when the envious and jealous courtiers colluded with one another and devised stratagem to put down the minister in the consideration of the king. One envious courtier told to the king in confidence, " Your Majesty! You must exercise care in dealing with the minister! He is bestowing so much attention and gifts on the subjects that he is very popular with them. The secret behind this tactic is that he is planning to overthrow you and occupy the throne. If you wish to test him, call him and seek his opinion that you wish to leave the crown and take to the life of an ascetic. Then decide for yourself the course of action after knowing his mind whether he wants to get rid of you or not!"

One day the king talked to his favorite minister in confidence, " You know what condition I was in before I ascended the throne. I might again fall back to the same condition in the future! Therefore, what is the use of a kingdom that is transitory! I wish to entrust it to some capable person and go into ascetic seclusion. I need your advice in this matter. The minister cried hearing what the king told him. He said, " Your Majesty! Getting a permanent thing with difficulty is preferable to getting transitory materials

without any effort! Your desire is noble and the Almighty will endow you with blessings of both piety and worldly wealth!"

Since the king's mind was already poisoned, he didn't like what the minister suggested. The wise minister saw the changed expression on the face of the king and thought that the monarch was not happy with the advice given to him. He recalled the old man whom he had saved sometime ago. He called the man and recounted to him what transpired between him and the king. The man said, " I have reached the depth of the matter! Before anything happens wear the attire of a minstrel and go to the king and tell him that you are renouncing the world before the king adopted asceticism."

The minister did as the man advised him. When the king saw his minister in the garb of a beggar, he realized that the envious courtier had poisoned his mind to harm the minister. Otherwise the minister would not have abandoned his ministry before he himself went out as an ascetic.

The next day the king ordered all the pious persons out of the kingdom. After a few days he got information that two pious persons were hiding in the kingdom. He got them rounded up and burnt alive. There were no pious persons left in the realm. Some of the pious persons, at great personal risk to themselves and their supporters, remained hidden in the hope that at the appropriate time they would propagate the virtues of piety in the country. Yuzasaf, the king's son, was a youth now. He had grown into a wise and sagacious person. He was not worried by the thought that why he was cloistered with a small group of persons. He started wondering about his seclusion and wanted to investigate the reason thereof. He also thought of asking his father about the reason for his segregation. Then he thought it discreet not to ask his father because it was he who had ordered all the arrangements! In the group of learned persons, who were with him, was a man who took special liking to the prince, for his wisdom and cleverness. One day Yuzasaf told him, " I feel instinctively attracted towards you and consider you as my father. I know, I shall be succeeding my father as the king. At that time either your status will be either very high or you will be reduced to nothing!" The man asked, " Why is there a chance of my status becoming so inferior as you say?" The prince said, " I have a question to ask you. If you don't give me the correct reply, I shall give you the maximum punishment that will be in my power!" The man was very scared hearing what the prince said and found conviction in the youth's tone. Therefore he confided with the prince about the predictions of the astrologers, incarceration of the child in a lonely mansion and keeping the prince ignorant about matters of piety. The prince thanked the man profusely for making him wise about the affairs concerning him and congratulated him for a glorious future in store for him.

When the king visited the prince thereafter, he greeted him respectfully and said, " Your Majesty! I haven't been able to understand why I am incarcerated in this lonely mansion? Why am I forbidden to go out in the open? Is it a punishment for any crime that I have committed? If the reason is to keep me ignorant of the matters of life and death, then how long I could be kept in such ignorance? One day the world will itself inform me of all

this! I seek your permission to let me go out. Otherwise the curiosity will kill me one day!"

The king understood that the secret of keeping the prince in seclusion has somehow come into his knowledge. He ordered the special retainers to take the prince out in a procession of horses.

Yuzasaf stirred out in great pomp and pageantry. It was like a festival in the entire realm. From that day Yuzasaf used to go out in the city occasionally. One day he noticed two men. One had a swollen and yellowish face. The other was blind. He asked people about the condition of the persons.

They said, " The person with swollen body suffers from pains that have caused his present condition. The other person lost his sight because of an ailment of the eyes!" Yuzasaf asked them if they were the only two sickly persons or there were any more of them?

- People said several persons fall ill.
- The prince was affected learning about the suffering of the people.
- He went out on an excursion on another day. He saw a feeble, old person. His hair was grey and his back was bent forward that made it difficult for him to walk.
- He asked people, " Is the old man the only of his type or there were many more such persons?
- The people said, " Everyone reaches this stage in his advanced age!"
- The prince asked, " In how many years a person becomes like the way the old man was?"
- They said, " About a hundred years of age!"
- The prince asked, " what happens to them, thereafter?"
- They said, " The person dies or goes to the other world!"
- The prince was much affected hearing all this.
- He called the person from his companions in the mansion, who was his confidante. and asked him, " If this world is not the permanent abode of men, and the Hereafter is really the final abode, then why people are so much enamoured of the world!?"
- The man related to the prince all the reasons in detail as to why the king wanted to keep him in seclusion.
- The prince asked, " Are there any men of God who are not attached to the world?"
- The man said there were many such persons in the realm but they have been banished to other countries by the king. It might be possible that a few are still there hiding themselves from the fear of the king's anger and punishment. They must be awaiting the end to this tyrannical rule to be able to freely preach the people.

From that day onwards the prince became very pensive and contemplative. It was the talk of the town that the prince has turned his mind towards piety. At this time there arrived from the island of Sarandeep a man of piety, Balohar by name, and he got wind of the

interest of the prince in piety. Balohar had come to the kingdom by boat and had met the courtier close to the prince in the guise of a merchant. He told them that he had a miraculous medicine that can bring back sight to totally blind persons. It can also give the faculty of hearing to persons who are totally deaf. The medicine also had, he said, power to cure any incurable ailment. It can give strength to the physically weak, it will make the mentally weak into wise and can give the possessor control over his mortal enemies. He told them that he wanted to show the medicine to the prince. that he thought he was the right person to own it. He requested them to get an audition from the prince for him. The courtier first wanted to see the medicine before he could seek an appointment from the prince. The man said that none other than the prince could bear to look at the medicine.

Hearing this from Balohar, the courtier went to the prince and recounted what transpired between him and the merchant. The intuition of the prince gave him a feeling that he could learn something interesting from the merchant newly arrived from Serendeep. He wanted Balohar to meet him privately in the quiet of night. The prince treated him with due respect and courtesy. Balohar said, " I never thought that your highness would give such respect to a total stranger?" The prince said, " The secret that I wish to unravel, seems possible of solution through you! "

Balohar said, " I am deeply grateful to you for the kindness you have for me! I wish to tell you a tale. There was a king in a certain country. The king was well known for his good nature and kindness to his subjects. One day while he was riding for pleasure, the king noticed two persons dressed in tattered garments. The king dismounted his steed, greeted them and talked to them with respect. He shook hands with both the persons. The courtiers accompanying the king didn't like the gesture. They couldn't tell anything to the king but went to his elder brother and complained about what they thought was the indiscretion of the king. The brother went to the king and admonished him. He heard his elder brother with respect and patience.

The next morning the king deputed the ' messenger-of-death' to his elder brother's house. It was a custom there that the king used to have an official messenger-of-death who would call on the person the king ordered to be executed.

Hearing about the visit of the messenger-of-death everyone started crying at the residence of the king's elder brother. The elder brother, in a funeral procession, came to the court. Seeing the condition of the brother, the king said, " How ignorant and foolish a person are you that for no cause of capital punishment, just for getting a visit to your house from the messenger-of-death you are so worried and disconsolate! Don't you think of the day when the herald from Allah will call you and question about the treatment you meted out to Adam's progeny like you, who are as much your brothers as your own brothers are! What reply will you give? My courtiers misled you. They were themselves misled by the shabby and tattered apparel of those two pious persons! They were in fact men of deep piety and knowledge!

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Saying this, the king ordered four big chests to be brought. First two were smeared with coal tar and filled with jewels and locked. The other two chests were filigreed with gold

and silver. But he got them filled with garbage. Now he called the courtiers who had complained to his brother. And asked them to tell which of the chests were more valuable. They said that the chests with golden filigree are valuable and those with covering of coal tar are not of any value.

The king ordered the chests covered with coal tar to be opened. The jewels inside there illumined the court premises. The king said, “ These chests are like those two wise persons in tatters! You considered them with least respect seeing their exterior appearance! You have said that the chests with covering of gold are valuable. They are like those hypocrites who dress in costly garment and pretend to be wise and pious. Such persons, with all their external finery, are full of garbage and trash as are these golden chests!”

Hearing the story, the prince was very much impressed with Balohar. He caught hold of his hand and said, “ O wise person! Tell me some more story of wisdom!”

Balohar narrated another story replete with lesson of piety to the prince:

Every tiller of the soil sows seeds in the land. In that process some seeds fall on the corners of his holding that are consumed by the birds. Some seeds fall on stones and wither over a few days. Some of the seeds fall on thorny bushes that don’t allow them to grow and flourish. The seeds that fall on properly prepared and maintained soil, grow and yield a plentiful crop. O Prince! Excepting the seeds that drop on the properly prepared soil, the rest are just a waste for the farmer. Similarly words of virtue can only prosper and come from one who has a pure heart!

The Prince said, “ O wise person! The contentment that my heart is getting from your words of wisdom cannot be expressed! Relate to me some tale that reflects on the futility of the world!”

Balohar said, “ It is said that once an elephant chased a man. The man ran scared and the elephant chased him the more! On the way there was a well. Near the parapet of the well grew a tree. The man, in desperation, hung to a branch of the tree. He saw that at the base of the tree there were four snakes and under these snakes a python was lying with its mouth wide open! When he looked up, he found white and black mice cutting away the branch on which he was precariously hanging. He noticed that there was honey on a branch within his reach. He started licking the honey oblivious of the hazards around him. O prince! Life in the world is full of hazards and hardship. The four snakes are the strong passion, bile, phlegm and blood. Any excess or shortage of these in the body of a person can be the cause of his death. The two mice, white and black, are the day and night in the life of a person that are busy cutting short his life. The python with mouth wide open is the death. But the man thinks that the world for him is sweet like the honey! The sweetness of the honey makes him oblivious of the hazards around him!

Yuzasaf said, “ O wise man! Tell me some more fables like this.”

Balohar continued, “ It is said that a person had three friends. He used to love one of them very much. Whatever the person asked him to do, he would do with alacrity. The second friend too he loved dearly, but not as much as he liked the first. The third friend received little attention from the person.

One day the person was summoned to the king’s court on account of a complaint made by someone against him. He was much scared. He went to the first friend and told him of his worry. He asked him for help. The friend said, “ I have got a special raiment made for you that you can wear and go to the court.” The man was much disappointed with the reply. He went to the second friend and told him about his problem. He replied, “ I have so much work on hand that I cannot give you any time or attention. I can only walk a few paces with you on the way to the king’s court!” The man was disappointed with the second friend too, and came away from him crestfallen. He went to the third friend and begged his pardon that he had always neglected him. But he explained his problem to him. The friend said, “ Don’t be afraid! Your repentance at this time has come to your rescue! I shall come with you to the court and help you!”

Balohar continued, “ O prince! The first friend was wealth that promised to give him a shroud for his coffin, if required. The second friend was his child who agreed to walk a few paces on the way to his grave. The third friend was his good deeds that would keep company with him even after his death.

Hearing the parable, the prince said,” O wise person! Please tell me some more tales like this!”

Balohar said,” A kingdom had a very strange custom. Whenever the kings place fell vacant, they would catch the first traveler coming their way, they would catch and crown him king! They never told him how long he would remain the king. Then they would remove him from the throne after a year and get another stranger as the king. They used to leave the previous king to roam around the town as a beggar. Once, a stranger, when put on the throne, thought about the strange practice of the place and wondered how long he could remain in power! The people were strangers for him and he expected no sympathy from them. He therefore searched a person from his own town and told him about the strange manner in which he was crowned the king. The man advised him to transfer some wealth to another place for use in time of need. The king did follow the advice.

Balohar said, “ O prince! You are that king who acted on the advice and I am the friend who proffered the advice!”

Yuzasaf said,” O wise Balohar! Whatever you have said about the futility of the world has affected me so much that I don’t need any further advice. I wish now to hear from you about the Hereafter!”

Balohar said, “ O prince! Shunning the world itself is the key to the Hereafter! Whoever rejected this transitory world, got the kingdom of the immortal hereafter. This world involves man in seven types of hardship:

3 1. Affluence.
4 2. Thirst.
5 3. Summer heat.
6 4. Winter cold.
7 5. Pains.
8 6. Fears.
9 7. Death.

The prince asked Balohar, “ The king banished many persons, he burnt alive many more. What happened to the people that they did not rise to help the sufferers at the hands of the king? “

Balohar said, “ O prince! When the dogs discover a carcass, then one dog fights with the other to grab a major share of the feast. One wants to eat the complete carcass and the other barks and bites to ward it off. In the meantime if a person arrives there, the dogs leave the carcass and try to attack the person, although the person may not be a claimant of the carcass lying there. Similar is the condition of men in this world. Like dogs they fight over the transitory benefits of the world. When a wise person arrives to guide them about the futility of the world, they go to attack and maul him as did the dog to the intruding person!”

Yuzasaf said, “ O Balohar! I have heard your parables and have learnt about the futility of the world! By nature I am not interested in worldly things. I am very grateful to you for your words of wisdom! Now, tell me how could one prepare well for the Hereafter?”

Whatever I have narrated to you so far are also the keys to the doors of virtue and the protection against evil. They are the elixirs of life that make one immortal. They are potions that eliminate the need for any other treatment. It is the rope of God holding which one will never go astray.

Yuzasaf said, “ Why people don’t derive benefit from this knowledge of wisdom?”

Balohar replied, “ Wisdom and knowledge is like the sun that gives its light to everyone. It is for the people to make good use of the light. If people don’t want to derive benefit from the sun, is it any fault of the sun that distributes its light equitably!

Similarly knowledge and wisdom are for people to make use of. Those who strive to acquire them, they get them in plenty.

Knowledge and wisdom is like a bright sun. Those whose hearts are receptive, they acquire the light. Those whose hearts are blind, they see no need for striving to acquire

knowledge. Of those who see the light of knowledge, there are some whose psyche turns them towards evil use of knowledge and wisdom.

- Yuzasaf asked, “ Are there any people who initially don’t accept the truth but come to the right path later on?”
- Balohar said, “ Yes! These are people whose hearts enlighten after long spells of darkness.”
- Yuzasaf asked, “ Hasn’t any wise person ever told the words of wisdom to my father?”
- Balohar said, “ It is possible that your father might not have been motivated by the talk of wise persons and was guided by persons of other type!”

There used to be a king whose vizier was a person of wisdom and knowledge. But to please the king, the vizier too was indulging in idolatry. Out of the fear of the king, he never tried to guide him to the right path. One day the king went hunting. The vizier too was with him. On the way they passed through a ruin from where some light was coming. They went inside and found an ugly looking, ill clad mendicant sitting in a dirty corner. The man had stinking feces all around him. In front of him there was an earthen pitcher full of some beverage. The man had a musical instrument with him. He was playing the instrument. The man had an ugly woman with him. She would give the drink to the man from the pitcher and dance to the tune of the instrument played by him. Both of them appeared so contented and happy that, perhaps, none else in the world would be as happy as they were! The king told to the vizier, “ Perhaps both of us have never been as happy as they are!” They are contented despite all the filth around them.” Vizier thought that it was a good opportunity for him to talk to the king. He said, “ There is a group of virtuous people who, when they look at us, feel the same way as we are feeling on setting our eyes on these wretches!”

- The king asked, “ Who are those people?”
- The vizier said, “ They are the people who are the ardent followers of the True Faith! They are aware of the Kingdom of the Hereafter!
- The king asked, “ What is the Kingdom of the Hereafter?”
- The vizier said, “ It is the place where richness is not aware of penury, where happiness doesn’t know sadness, where health is never affected with sickness where life knows not death, where monarchy never falls! Allah has removed from the inmates of the Hereafter all pain, illness, thirst and death!

- Yuzasaf said, “ O wise sage! I have heard from you about the Realm of Hereafter and about the Almighty King. Now, tell me what is your age?”
- Balohar said, “ Twelve years!”
- The prince was surprised to hear this. He said, “ To me you appear to be at least sixty years of age!”
- Balohar said, “ Your guess is right. It is sixty years ago that I was born. But my real life is that during which period I got enlightened about the knowledge of the

Hereafter. The other years spent in transient worldly activities I don't consider as a part of my life,"

- Yuzasaf asked, " O wise man! Will you be happy if you meet with death tomorrow?"
- Balohar said, " Why tomorrow! Even if I die now and here, I shall be achieving the greatest happiness!"
- The prince asked, " If death is such a good thing, will it be right to commit suicide? Give me an example to illustrate to me the matter."
- Balohar said, " A person had a garden. He spent all his time tending the garden. One day he noticed a bird sitting on a branch nibbling a fruit. He was furious and caught the bird in a net. When he wanted to kill the bird, it spoke with Allah's consent," If you eat me, what is the use. I cannot be more than a morsel for you. If you free me, I shall give you counsel that would be more than any riches that you can think of!"
- He asked the bird, " What is that advice?"
- The bird said, " If you promise to free me, I shall tell you three very invaluable things."
- The man gave her his word.
- The bird said, " Listen and remember well:
  1. Don't mourn over what is dead and gone.
  2. Don't believe in the impossible.
  3. Don't try to get things that are out of your reach.
- Hearing these words from the bird, the man released it.
- The bird flew to the top of the tree and said," By releasing me you have suffered such a big loss that you can never make good!
- Worried, the man asked," What loss have I suffered?"
- If you had slaughtered me, you would have found in my innards a pearl as big as the egg of a swan. Its value would have made you rich and contented for life!"
- The man felt very sorry on hearing what the bird said. He told to the bird, " Let bygone be bygone! Come with me to my house where I shall keep you happy!"
- The bird replied, " I know what fate would come to me if I go with you! You fool! Awhile ago I told you not to regret over what has passed! Don't believe in the impossible! Don't try to acquire what is not in your reach! Now you are regretting over what has passed! You believe on the impossibility that there is a big pearl inside my body! Have you not thought that I am myself not as big as the swans' egg."
- Balohar said, " O prince! These people of the world have made the idols with their own hands and believe that the idols have made them! They protect the idols and believe that the idols protect them! They approve of all things that are physically impossible! They too are foolish as the owner of the garden!"
- Yuzasaf asked, " O sage! Tell me who is the biggest tyrant and who is the most magnanimous?"
- Balohar said, " The biggest tyrant is one who considers his tyranny is just! The most just is one who delivers justice to everyone without fear or favor."
- Yuzasaf asked, " What are virtues and vices?"
- Balohar replied, " Virtues are truth and righteousness and bad intentions are the vices!"

- Yuzasaf asked, " What are good intentions?"
- Balohar replied, " Good intentions are equity in thoughts."
- Yuzasaf asked, " What is the most likeable characteristic?"
- Balohar replied, " Hospitality, humility and speaking softly with men of piety."
- Yuzasaf asked, " Which trait in a man is most likeable?"
- Balohar replied, " Love for the men of truth!
- Yuzasaf asked, " A king has been an idolater from his childhood, has been leading a life of lechery and debauchery, has harmed and killed men of piety and not done any good deed in his life. Is there any chance of his reforming himself in his twilight years for a better life in the Hereafter?"
- Balohar said, " I fully understand who you refer to. It is your father that you are concerned about! It is natural that you love your father and wish to earn a pardon from the Almighty for his Hereafter! There is always a chance of pardon if a person repents his past acts and refrains from them during the rest of his life.

Listen to one tale:

" There was once a king who treated his subjects kindly and with justice. The subjects were very loyal and dedicated to him. The king died. He did not have any male issue. One of his wives was pregnant once and the astrologers had predicted that she would bear a male child. Therefore, a male child took birth. There was general celebration in the realm. For a full year it was like a perpetual festival in the kingdom. The pious and religious persons warned the people against the unnecessary pomp and pageantry. They said that the people were expressing their thanks to their Creator and were indulging in the ways of the Satan. The people took cognizance of this advice and spent one year in prayer and supplication. The astrologers predicted that the prince would adopt bad ways but reform himself later on.

It did happen accordingly. When the crown prince was of age thirty-two, he assembled his ministers and courtiers in a grand mansion. In the grounds adjoining the palace there was the congregation of the kingdom's troops. The prince was delirious with happiness. To have a look at his happy face, the prince ordered a mirror to be brought. He noticed in the reflection of his face that there was a grey hair in his black beard. He cried at this sight. He thought that his youth had departed him. He thought that the grey hair was the messenger of death for him. He cried and descended from his throne. He told his courtiers, " What sort of a king I was for you?" In one voice they said, " We have no words to express our gratefulness to you! We are your faithful subjects! Give us orders and we shall sacrifice our lives for you!" The prince said, " One enemy of whom I am much concerned has entered the court and none of you is aware of it! No one comes to my help!"

The courtiers cried in unison, " O king! Who is that enemy?"

The prince said, " It is a pity that I have always been thinking that you are all my friends and well-wishers! I showered wealth and riches on you! I did all that for the single reason

that you would come to my help in times of need! But the enemy has arrived and you remained oblivious of the fact!" The courtiers said, " Please show us who that enemy is? We shall instantly destroy him!" The king replied, " The enemy is the messenger of death who is reminding me that the days of monarchy, rest and pomp are over for me and I must prepare myself for the final journey!"

The courtiers said, " O King! There is no remedy for death! Every person, howsoever powerful, will be helpless in front of death!" The prince said, " I was under a deception so far! Satan duped me! I was falsely depending on your help in all matters! Now I am determined to shun the love and friendship of the worldly friends and spend the rest of my life in the love and friendship of one who will help me in the Hereafter! I shall have nothing to do with this throne and the crown!" Hearing this the concourse cried. They pleaded with him not to abandon them. They took a resolve that if the king abdicated, they would, like their monarch, have nothing to do with worldly pleasures from that day. The king acquiesced to their wishes and ruled thereafter for 32 years.

Yuzasaf said, " O wise sage! Hearing this tale, I have felt happiness in my heart! Tell me some more tales like this that would increase my knowledge and understanding!"

Balohar continued " It is said that there was once a king. He was very fond of pomp and pleasure. He was engulfed in carnal sins. The subjects were unhappy with his neglect of the matters of state. The enemies were raising their heads because of the weak administration in the kingdom. The subjects were getting fed up of the raids of the enemies on their lives and property. One of the sons of the king was very pious and noble. He used to advice the people to be pious and God-fearing. When his father died, this prince ascended the throne. With his pious and noble attitude, the kingdom was able to subdue all the enemies. Peace and tranquility prevailed in the realm. Everything in control, the king turned his attention towards worldly pleasures. His depravity went to the extent that if he found anyone offering prayers, he would slay the person. The depravity went to such an extent that the people started considering the king as a god! Power went so much to his head that his eyes were totally closed from the truth!
Amongst the courtiers of the king there was a man of piety. He used to feel very bad at the state of affairs in the kingdom. He wished to remind the king of his ways that he adopted prior to ascending the throne. He was waiting for an opportune time to open the eyes of the monarch without offending his ire. The man had no other person in the court that could have assisted him in his design. But there was one pious person in the capital, living in a lonely place on the outskirts. One day the pious courtier took a bold step to open the eyes of the king to the reality. He wrapped the skull of a dead person in a scarf and brought to the court. He unwrapped the scarf in front of the king and started kicking the skull with his feet. . The skull cracked and the bones scattered on the floor. The king was very angry at seeing all this.

All the courtiers were stunned at what they saw. Seeing the anger writ on the face of the king, the executioners came close to the courtier with swords unsheathed ready to pounce on him at the slightest indication from the king. But in those days the kings had a custom not to order executions at the spur of the moment. They used to deeply consider the

matter before pronouncing the final judgement. The king too controlled his anger and did not order the slaying of the courtier.

The courtier repeated the same act on the second and the third day. The king did not say anything. On the fourth day the courtier had tied up a skull on one side and a quantity of sand on the other. He also carried a weighing balance to the court. He kept the skull in front of him In one pan of the scale he put a coin and in the other he put the sand. When both the pans were balanced he started putting the sand through the mouth of the skull and also through the holes of the eyes.

The king was very puzzled with this strange behavior of the courtier. He said, “ What is the reason for your mad behavior in my presence? Have you gone bold that I respect and honor you much! Explain, what you mean by this strange act?”

Hearing this, the courtier got up and touched the feet of the king. He said, “ O monarch! I have to tell you something! If you give me a patient hearing I wish to tell you some words of wisdom! You know that the words of wisdom are like an arrow that pierces a soft thing and doesn’t affect a stone! Good advice is like the rain -water. When it falls on good soil, it brings forth flowers and fruit, on a rocky soil it does nothing! Human beings have innumerable wishes and therefore it will be a constant struggle between wisdom and the desires. If desires dominate, good advice has no effect! When wisdom prevails, good advice has its effect and the person comes to the right path! Now, I shall explain the purpose of my actions!

From childhood I am fond of acquiring knowledge and skills! I used to spend lot of time in search of knowledge. When I acquired knowledge, I started doing experiments. One day, during my researches, I happened to enter the royal graveyard. This soiled skull way lying near an old grave. Because I have great admiration for the kings, I picked up the skull and brought it home. At home I cleaned it and wrapped it in a silk scarf. I used to wash it with rose water and keep it at a prominent place in my house. I thought that if it is a king’s skull, it might revive to its original condition and the king might come back to life! I did the exercise for many days but I noticed no change in the skull. Then I thought that perhaps the skull belongs to some poor mendicant. I trusted it to a poor person to take care of it. He kept it in a shabby and dusty place. But no change came about in the skull.

When all my efforts brought about no change in the skull I visited some wise people. They too were unable to satisfy me. Now I thought that the king is the wisest person in the realm and I must present my problem before him.

I have adopted this stratagem of the demonstrations to seek your help in solving the problem. I wish to know if the skull is that of a king or of a pauper! I have seen that the kings are never satisfied of their possessions! Even if they capture the entire world, they think of capturing the skies! I measured sand equal to the weight of a coin and the eyes of the skull were filled. Similarly I put a handful of sand into the mouth of the skull and it was full. Although I have never seen the mouth of a king being sated any time! If I

imagine that the skull belongs to a pauper, then what was it doing in the royal graveyard. How did the poor man reach there? I want to solve this mystery! If the skull belongs to a king, it must have once enjoyed pomp and power as you do now!

O my king! I cannot bear to think that one day you might be rendered to this helpless stage! Your majestic skull trampled by strangers! Your delicate body consumed by the vermin in the grave! Your body transiting from spacious palaces to a grave of two metres! These well-appointed palaces falling into the hands of strangers! When your subjects cry for your help, you are unable to provide it!

The king shivered hearing all this. Tears started rolling down his cheeks. When the courtier saw that his stratagem had an effect on the king, he told many more things in support of the argument. At last, the king came to the right path! He quit pomp and pleasure and adopted piety in his life. In the entire realm there was talk of virtue and piety. Many men of learning arrived in the realm and the people benefited from their company.

Yuzasaf said, " O wise person! My heart is not satisfied with your wise talk! Relate to me some more tales!"

Balohar said, " Listen, o prince!

In the olden days there was a king who was fabulously rich and powerful. The only thing he lacked was an heir to his crown. He tried all the possible ways to have a son but he grew old in this expectation. However in his twilight years Allah gave him a son. There was great jubilation in the realm. The child was brought up with great care. He grew up, started to crawl, walk and also learned to talk. One day, while he was playing, he took one step and said, " *Meaad* (Resurrection) is bound to come and you are committing injustice!" The child took another step and said, " You will grow old!". The child took the third step and said, " Then you shall die!" Now the child busied himself in play. The king who was observing this, was much amazed at the talk of the little prince.
The astrologers were summoned and informed of the precocious utterances of the little prince. They were ordered to investigate the matter and give their report. The astrologers drew up their charts but were unable to predict anything significant. One astrologer made a wild guess and said that the child would be very pious and kind of nature.

Hearing this, the king was very angry and kept the prince in isolation. He appointed his trusted men to look after the child. When the prince reached his youth, went out of the palace giving a slip to his guardians. He was passing through the bazaar when he saw a funeral procession going. He asked someone, " What is this?" He was told that the people were carrying a dead person to the graveyard. He asked, " What is the reason for the death of the person?" He was told that the man had grown old and feeble and it was time for his death. The prince asked, " Was he earlier like us, young and healthy?" they replied that in his younger days the man was very healthy and an adept at wrestling! The prince went a little further and noticed an old man. He asked," What sort of a person is this? Why he looks so weak?" The reply was, " He is much advanced in years, his limbs are

weak and all his faculties too are weak because of old age!” The prince asked, “ Was this man ever a youth like me?” They replied, “ Yes! He was first a child, then grew into a youth, and adult and is now an old man!” The prince went further up and found a sick person. He asked,” How was this person earlier?” They said, “ This man was healthy and strong earlier. His ailment has rendered him weak!” Hearing this the prince stood brooding for a long while and then said, “ By God! If whatever has been told to me is true, then the people are foolish that they keep happily moving around. They are mad imbeciles!

Now the prince turned back and quietly returned to his palace and lay down on his bed. He stared into the roof for sometime. Then he called a servant and asked him, “ Have the rafters of the roof been in the same way as they are now or they had some other shape?” the servant replied, “ The seedlings grew into huge trees in the soil. Then they were cut into timber that was finally shaped into the rafters that have been fixed on the roof!”

Around the same time the king sent his vizier to inquire about the progress of the prince and to ascertain what he talks about. When the vizier met the prince, he too was asked similar questions. The vizier went to the king and told him that the prince speaks like an abnormal person. The king called for the astrologers and discussed the matter with them. The astrologers felt that the remedy for the prince would be to get him married. The king liked the suggestion and gave orders for arranging a suitable match for the prince. Men of wisdom and discretion were sent to the neighboring kingdoms to search for a girl of exceptional beauty as the consort for the prince.

Therefore, they selected a very pretty princess to be the bride of their prince. Preparations for the royal wedding were afoot. The city was decorated grandly. Arrangements were made for feasts, songs and dances. People from far and near started coming to witness the pageant. The prince started wondering why there was so much commotion in the city. He asked one of the servants about the spate of activity in the capital. The servant said, “ Preparations are going on for your wedding! You must be very happy for that!” Hearing this, the prince kept quiet.

Alas, an auspicious day was fixed for the wedding. One day the king called the bride-to-be and told her that she was chosen to consort the heir apparent of the crown. He told her that the prince was his only son and dearer to him than his own life! He asked her to speak with the prince in a manner that he got attracted to her.

When the wedding took place, the princess took good care of the prince. She tried her best to create love for her in the heart of the prince. When food was served, the bride took beverages as was her wont. The drinks intoxicated her and she went to sleep. The prince got the opportunity to slip away from the palace. He started going round the city. In a lane he found a youth of his own age and made friends with him. He made the youth wear his expensive clothes and himself wore the ordinary garments of his friend. With mutual consent they went out of the city and early morning hid themselves in a secluded place.

When the bride woke from her sleep of intoxication, she found the prince missing. When she didn't find him anywhere in the palace, she sat down losing all hope. At dawn all the servants started searching for the prince in the entire city. At sunset the prince started on his journey with his friend. In this manner they were hiding themselves at dawn in a secluded place and start their onward journey around dusk. They arrived in the capital of another king. The king had a daughter who was a very pretty lass. The king had made a resolution that he would marry his daughter to anyone she personally liked. He had constructed a separate palace for his daughter to live with the husband of her choice. There was a balcony in the palace towards the main thoroughfare from where the princess could watch the youth passing by and make her choice of the consort.

The princess was watching from the balcony when the prince and his friends passed that way. She noticed the youth with majestic manners dressed in the garments of ordinary people. She took instant liking to him. She sent word to the king that she wished to marry the youth. The king was very happy to hear this and rushed to the youths in a disguise. He asked, " Who are you, and from where you are coming?" The prince said, " I am a poor wayfarer. What work you have with me?" The king said, " You look strangers in this city. Tell me about yourself in detail!" The prince said, " I am not poor and needy! What is the need for you to inquire about me?" However much the king tried to ask him, the prince didn't respond. He returned to the palace and briefed some men to make full inquiries about the youths.

When the agents of the king failed to extract any information from the prince, the king sent his men to bring the youths to his court. He asked the men, " What work has the king with me? Neither I know the king nor do I have to seek any favors from him" When the prince adamantly refused to go along with the king's men, they forcefully took him to the court. The king was very delighted to see the youth and treated him with affection and respect. He offered him a chair to sit in the court. The king's wife and daughter too were watching him from behind the curtain.

The king said," O youth! I have summoned you for a noble purpose. I wish that you agreed to be my son-in-law! I have no dearth of wealth. You will live your entire life in luxury! Your respect and honor will be like that of kings!"

The prince replied," O noble king! I have no wish for these things! If you permit me, I shall narrate a tale in this connection." The king gave permission. The prince said:

" There was a prince. Some of his friends arranged a banquet for him. After the food, the friends had a round of drinks. They all got intoxicated and slept as the party was in the night. The prince woke up sometime in the night and started alone for his palace. In a state of intoxication he forgot the way to the palace and reached the graveyard of the place. He found one fresh grave dug up. He thought he had reached home and fell into the grave. He got the smell of the dead body. He thought that his servants had put the fragrance of rose in his room. He also thought the coffin of the dead man was the bed sheet. The prince thought the dead body as his beloved that she had slept after waiting long for his return from the party. He slept there the whole night and periodically kissed

the dead man gently. With dawn he awoke and found himself with the dead body in the grave. He felt very scared and ran towards the city. He felt very ashamed of his condition. Reaching the palace he took a bath of cleanliness, wore fresh clothes and applied perfumes to his body and the garments. He thanked God that he reached the palace safely." The prince now asked the king, " Having committed the mistake, will he ever repeat the blunder?" The king said, " No! Never!" The prince replied, " My condition is just like that of the prince!" The king turned to his wife and daughter and told them, " You have heard what the youth said! How can we expect to change his decision?" The queen said, " Perhaps, if our daughter's qualities are mentioned to him, he might reconsider his decision!" The king said, " O youth! My wife wants to meet you and talk to you. In the past she has never come out to talk to any strange males." The prince said, " I have no objection if the queen wishes to talk to me." The queen came out in the court, sat near the prince and said," O my son! Don't refuse to marry my daughter. It is a Blessing of God! You will benefit a lot. If you know my daughter's beauty of face and character, then you will certainly consider yourself lucky to find such a match. You will thank God for blessing you with such a consort!" The prince said, " O queen! I shall tell you a tale in this regard. Kindly listen with attention:

" There was a king whose treasury was filled with immense wealth. He had innumerable wonders from all corners of the world in that treasury. The thieves planned to plunder the kings treasure. They entered the treasury by drilling into the wall of the building. The thieves might not have seen such wonders even in their wildest dreams. They saw a barrel made of gold and thought that it must be full of valuable treasures. They thought that the things stored in a container of gold must be more valuable than the gold. The thieves happily picked up the barrel and escaped from the treasury. When they reached the forest, they were curious to look at the contents and divide the booty. They all assembled around the mouth of the barrel and tried to remove the lid. When they lifted the lid, many poisonous snakes came out of the barrel .With the bites of these snakes all the thieves fell dead in the forest. O noble queen! Would a person who knows this tale dare to take a share of the treasure?!" The queen said," Definitely not!" The prince replied, " Then how could I accept your proposal!" the princess told to the king, " If you permit me, I would personally like to speak to the youth?" The king consented and the princess came out into the chamber of the court walking gracefully and sat near the prince, She said, " O youth! Tell me frankly if ever you have seen any female so well endowed with beauty as I am! But I am interested in consorting you. If you refuse, you will certainly repent!" The prince said, " Listen to a tale that I wish to relate and then we shall talk further:

" The king had two sons. During a battle, the enemy captured one of the princes. He was incarcerated in a very small, dark room. He also issued orders that whoever passed that way should throw stones at the prince. When many days elapsed, the other prince had pangs of affection for his lost brother. He asked his father, the king, to permit him to go and try to get his brother released through some clever stratagem." The king said, " It is a noble design! Prepare for the journey and start without any loss of time!"

The prince took with him lot of merchandise for trading and also a group of dancing girls to give an impression that he was a trader. When this group reached the ramparts of the

city of the enemy king, word reached the monarch of their arrival and he asked his men to fetch the trader into the city with full respect.

The servants gave due respect to the travelers. They entered the city, unpacked the merchandise and the slaves of the prince were ordered by him to go to several vantage spots in the city and sell the products at low prices. He particularly asked them to go to the bazaar closer to where his brother was confined.

Therefore the slaves made a beeline to the bazaar near the spot where the prince was held. Their prices were so down to earth that the entire population rushed to buy the wares. The prince crept nearer to the place his brother was incarcerated. . He picked up a pebble and threw it on the place to ascertain if his brother was still alive. When the pebble hit him, the prince started shouting. The guards rushed to him and said, " Every day the people throw pebbles at you but you never shout as you have done today? Why are you so distraught today?" He said, " Every day when people throw stones at me I feel that they are strangers and may have no sympathy for me. But today when I was hit by the pebble, I felt as if someone close to me has thrown it!" The men were surprised to hear what the prince said.

The next morning the prince sent his men with more valuable things to sell at the same spot. He sent along with them the dancing girls to entertain the crowds. The men started selling and the women sang and danced. The entire populace got busy with the entertainment. The prince stealthily entered the place of confinement of his brother, cut away his chains and brought him out. He hid him in the house where his group was staying. The wounds of the prince were properly dressed. When the prince was slightly improved, he was mounted on a fast steed and sent away. He was instructed that on the way, at a certain place a boat waited on the bank of the river to take him safely home. The prince proceeded in the direction where he was told the boat awaited him. Unfortunately, after some time, he lost the way and reached a dense forest. On the way he fell into a well. There was a python in that well. When he looked up, he found several fierce looking bandits with swords in their hands. With great difficulty he emerged from the well and ran from there. After many days of wandering he found a road. Fortunately he was able to reach the boat and sailed safely to his city."

The prince now asked the princess, " Would a person who had undergone so much hardship, be willing to get involved in further danger?" The princess said, " No! Never!" The prince said, " I am in a similar predicament!"

Hearing all this, the king, the queen and the princess were disappointed. The prince's friend, the youth, whispered in his ears that if he was not interested in marrying the princess, he could recommend him to the king for the match!

The prince told to the king, " If you approve of my friend here, he would be willing to accept the princess as his bride. But his example will be like a group of people who boarded a boat that sank in the middle of a river. All the passengers were drowned but for a sole survivor who held to a small plank of wood and reached an island. There he started

looking around the scenic place. The island was inhabited by devils. One she-devil fell in love with the man. She came to him in the shape of a very beautiful woman and took him with her. The whole night they had fun. In the morning she killed him and gave his flesh to the children to eat. After some days-another person chanced to land in the island. The she-devil saw him. She took him along, spent the night with him and at dawn she wanted to kill him when he escaped from her clutches and ran away. He went to the shore and found a boat approaching. The man started shouting for help. When the sailors noticed him, they came near the shore and took him on board. The man reached home safely. The devils in the island thought that the she-devil had eaten the man herself without sharing with the others. They asked her to search the runaway and bring him, otherwise they would kill and eat her flesh! In her searches, the devil reached the house of the man. She went there in the form of a young woman. She told him that she was the same she-devil he spent a night with on the island and had come to take him there! The man started crying and begging her to spare him. The she-devil took pity on him and agreed to free him. The man took her to the king of the place. The king asked them, " Tell me, what is the problem between you two?" The she-devil said, " O King! I am his wife. I love him very much. But he dislikes me. He refuses to come to me. I seek justice from you!"

The king fell head over heel in love with her good looks. He thought of acquiring her for himself. He took the man in privacy and said, " If you don't like the woman, you divorce her. I shall marry her!" The man said," I agree to your order! I am divorcing her!" With the king's orders the woman was admitted to the harem. In the night he slept with her. At dawn the she-devil cut the king into pieces and took them to the island and distributed to the devils to eat. ."

The prince said, " O king! Will the one who has experienced all this ever dare to visit the island of the devils again?"

Hearing this the friend of the prince said, " Now I cannot consent to be the king's son-in-law. I shall not abandon the company of my friend!"

Therefore, they both took leave of the king and went their way. They wandered through cities and realms and kept learning lessons from the experiences they had during the journeys.. They busied themselves in piety and supplication. They continued giving instruction to people about virtues of piety. Lots of people reformed under their instruction. The prince became very famous throughout the world for his wisdom and piety."

Yuzasaf was very sad when Balohar went away. But he busied himself in prayer. When he attained the status of a pious person, he thought of travelling to other countries and propagating the truth. Allah sent an angel to him. The angel came to him in the human form and said, " Allah sends you His blessings and praises. You are amidst the humans like a human being amongst the wild animals! I have been sent by Allah to instruct you about piety and the Hereafter. Remove the worldly attire and shun the worldly wishes! Abdicate the worldly monarchy that always ends in shame and ruin. Try to acquire the

kingdom that has no decline! Adopt truth in talk and actions! Tread the path of justice! Allah has made you the leader of the pious and guide for the multitudes!"

Hearing this, Yuzasaf prostrated. The angel ordered him to guide the people and told him that he must travel to other lands to spread the message!

Therefore, Yuzasaf determined to commence his journeys. He didn't inform his people about his intentions. At the appointed time the angel appeared again. Yuzasaf took his courtier, his confidante, along. When he mounted the steed, a handsome nobleman held the rein and asked, " Where are you going leaving your subjects behind?" Yuzasaf tried to calm him down saying, " God is with you!" Yuzasaf started on his journey. After riding for sometime, he sent the courtier back to the city along with the horse. He wanted to journey on foot! The courtier said, " O prince! The king would definitely execute me!" Yuzasaf handed over his expensive raiment and the ruby to the courtier and asked him to convey his greetings to the king. When Yuzasaf proceeded further he found delicious fruits in the forest. He thought they were the tidings of prophethood. He received from Allah the knowledge and information about the realm of the spirits.

Yuzasaf expressed gratitude for Balohar and riveted his attention to the cause of reforming his loving father. He thought that bringing his father to the right path was the first step towards achieving the blessing of the Hereafter!

Therefore, he sent a messenger to his father with fondest greetings and said that his beloved son was abandoning the transitory wealth and pomp to prepare himself for the immortal Hereafter. He desired that his beloved father too adopted the path to righteousness. He told him that it was his first duty to bring one who loved him the most to the right path!

The king heard the son's message. He asked him to visit him. He got motivated to accept the path of piety. Yuzasaf then traveled from city to city preaching the path of truth and piety. He reached Kashmir in the end and motivated the entire population to the right path. It was there that he breathed his last.

The messages that Yuzasaf communicated to the people were not the thoughts of a philosopher but were the truths about piety, the Hereafter and straight forward and attractive instructions. May Allah give the pious people opportunity to benefit from these facts.

THE SIXTH FRUIT
WHAT THE WORLD MEANS

There are some people who portray the world as something undesirable and are themselves involved in iniquitous practices. They portray such practices as virtuous and

ask people to follow them. Therefore the world that has been censured by the *Shariah* must be critically studied to ascertain what is good and what is evil.

The meaning attached by people to the world is erroneous. Shunning the world doesn't mean totally abandoning it and considering it as a sworn enemy. In fact craving for death and praying for death is tantamount to refusing the bounties of Allah. Craving for the transient worldly goods is contemptible. Such people become totally oblivious of the fact of death and keep themselves busy running after worldly benefits and laurels. They think that they have a long life ahead of them and there is still time to crave Allah's indulgence for the wrongful acts committed by them. They spend their lives acquiring worldly riches and grandeur and commit all the evil acts thinking that they are beneficial for them. Otherwise, the world and the life in the world provide people the opportunity to excel in knowledge and piety. If the world were not there, how the pious people would perform their duty of offering prayers to their Creator!

Imam Zain al Abedeeen (a.s.) says in one of his supplications, " O Allah! Give me more years of life that I spend it in your obedience and prayer! And if this period is to be spent by me in evil (Satanic) deeds, then hasten my death that I don't become liable to Your Retribution!"

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says, " O Men! Why don't you take lesson from your forbears? Consider their deaths to visualize your own demise! This world is a very becoming place for those who take a lesson. This is the place of safety for the wise. How can one hold the world with contempt when it is a kind Warner! It keeps telling man that it is not a place for one to live forever! The day of final journey is nigh! If not today, tomorrow one has to depart from here! One who was rich yesterday, is poor today! He who was healthy then, is weak and sickly now! One who was alive yesterday, is dead and gone today. The world is thus trying to awaken the forgetful man from his sleep!

Similarly all the riches of the world are not contemptible. The contemptible wealth is that which makes one forget Allah and use it for selfish and ignoble purposes. The wealth that is equitably used for personal comforts and also in the way of Allah for the betterment and uplift of one's fellow beings will make one deserving of the benefits of the Hereafter. This type of acquisition and use of wealth is venerable."

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, "Affluence is venerable if it is made the source of achieving piety and righteousness."

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) was asked by a person," O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! I have love for the world and its riches! I also wish that people in this world look towards me with respect! " The Imam (a.s.) asked , " Why do you have such a wish?" The man replied, " I have these desires because I want to benefit myself, to benefit my kith and kin, relatives and other needy persons. I have also a strong desire to perform my duty of the *Haj."* The Imam (a.s.) said, " This is not craving for the world! This is your step toward acquiring the benefits of the Hereafter!"

Similarly eating delicious food, wearing expensive garments acquiring valuable artifacts is not only the sign of being worldly, but it also depends on the intentions and the acts of the person who uses such things. Otherwise, Hazrat Sulaiman (a.s.)'s monarchy would have been termed worldly. To the contrary what he did was the best for the Hereafter.

In short, everything that keeps one away from Allah and the Hereafter is due to worldly avarice and that which is the cause of nearness to Allah and harbinger of the benefits of the Hereafter is venerable. Every hypocrite act that appears like prayer and devotion is nothing but an act to show off to the people of the world.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that piety is not abdicating one's wealth and making legitimate (*Halal)* things taboo (*Haram)* for oneself. But piety is having more faith in Allah than on one's own wealth and power. The true piety springs from the knowledge of the Quran, the *Sunnat* and acting on them. It is also subject to following the Holy Imams (a.s.) and fulfilling all the duties made mandatory by Allah for his creatures. A pious person has to drive away all worldly desires from his heart and every step he takes must be in consonance with Allah's dictates!

THE LOVE FOR WORLDLY GAINS

Generally mendicants (*faqeers)* surpass others in the avarice for worldly gains. They are definitely not pious persons. It proves the fact that the seekers of the world may not be identifiable from their outward appearances. The pious are those who implicitly follow the norms and tenets of the faith. These may include the entire gamut of activity viz.: prayer (*Namaz)*, fasting, trading, marriage, managing a household etc. If these activities are carried out contrary to the norms set by the Faith, then they will be termed contemptible. They are of three types:

1. *Duniya e Haram:* One deserves Allah's punishment if he perpetuates illegitimate (*Haram)* acts like offering prayers, intercourse and other worldly acts against the norms of *Shariah*.
2. *Duniya e Makrooh:* Perpetuating acts that have not been termed *Haram* by Allah, but are considered *Makrooh* or undesirable. For example: avarice for wealth, acquiring property more than necessary. These activities divert one's attention from Allah.
3. *Diniya e Mubah:* This is drawing pleasure from the legitimate blessings bestowed by Allah on the people. This may sometime also fall in the second category if a person tends to the side of excess. Sometimes a person does these acts considering them as an act of prayer and worship. Then, to attain that status, at other times, in his ignorance, a person avoids legitimate and essential activities assuming that he is doing it to please Allah.His acts would be tantamount to innovation (*Bidat)*, that is a sin!

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says," A man of piety is one who removes big desires from his heart. He thanks Allah for His Bounties and abstains from taboo activities."

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) was asked the meaning of *Zuhd (Piety)* by someone.. He said, "It is shunning activities that have been termed taboo (*Haram)* by Allah."
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " Men are of three types: the *Zahed (Pious), Saber (*Patient and contented) and the *Ragheb (* Inclined). *Zahed* is one for whom the pleasures and pains of this world make no difference. He is not over delighted to receive worldly gains nor is he very sad for the sufferings he undergoes. *Saber* is one who has worldly desires, but keeps a check over his desires despite achieving worldly gains. The transient nature of the worldly things creates dislike for them in his heart. *Ragheb* is a person who endeavors to achieve worldly gains without giving a thought to his desires being legitimate or illegitimate. The *Raghib* are people who are caught in the whirlpool of the world and keep trying to achieve their ends despite getting drowned in it.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, " O Abu Dharr! Allah has not ordered hoarding of wealth. He has sent a Revelation asking people to remember Him, talk about Him and spend their lives in His way. He wants to be thanked for the Bounties He has endowed to the people. O Abu Dharr! The wealth and the fame of this world destroy a person. These are two wolves that enter the flock of sheep and devour them overnight! Man keeps sleeping in the search of wealth and pelf and when he awakes he finds the angel of death calling him. He then realizes that every thing has turned topsy turvy and he will have to go empty handed!"
- It is narrated by Hazrat Abdallah bin Abbas when the coinage was first started, Satan felt very pleased and jumped in joy that he had a tool in his hands to lead men astray.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says that three things are the cause of trouble for men

1. Love for women: This is the sword of the Satan.
2. Intoxicants: This is the web of the Satan.
3. Love for Deenar & Dirham: This is the Satan's arrow.

- One who indulges in the love for women, he cannot abstain from taboo actions.
- One who takes the intoxicants cannot enter the portals of the Heaven.
- One who treats the Deenars and Dirhams as his friends is a creature of the world.

THE FIRST TRAIT:

Avarice in accumulating wealth is the worst of traits. A person with this trait will be tyrannical and proud and would commit big sins in his pursuit for wealth. A human being cannot have love for more than one entity. If he has love for amassing wealth, he will not have love for Allah. This, in other words, is called Mammon Worship! The cure for this ailment is that the person rivets his attention towards Allah and broods over the futility and transience of the world. Then the realization will come to him that all the wealth accumulated by him would be of no use. If he spent it in the way of Allah, he would get rewarded in the Hereafter. He should think that efforts for acquiring knowledge of the Faith and offering prayers to Allah would be for his good in this life and the Hereafter. He should not spend all his time running after acquisition of riches. He should bear in his mind the Retribution for amassing illegitimate riches. Even for the legitimate riches, one will be accountable on the Day of Judgement! If he spent his wealth in the way of Allah, he will get rewarded many times over! This reward will

come to him when he will find himself forlorn and helpless on the Day of Reckoning! The sustenance of man is the responsibility of Allah. Man should trust Him! Wealth is not such a thing that one can put complete trust in ! Pitiable fact is that those who accumulated vast wealth have left everything behind and departed for the other world empty handed! Such persons neglected preparation for the Hereafter. They have a heavy burden on their necks. Contrary to these, the persons who spent their lives in Allah's love and prepared for the Hereafter, had always been happy and contented during their lives in this world and have departed contentedly for the Hereafter!

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " One who has faith in the Day of Resurrection will not strive to accumulate wealth.:" He further said, " Once Bani Israel faced a severe famine. People started eating the cadavers of their own men. One day, a person dug up a grave. A tablet was retrieved by the man from the grave.. It was inscribed on the tablet that he was a certain prophet (a.s.) and that his grave would be dug up by a Nubian.. The tablet also had inscribed on it, ' O people! Be informed that whatever I sent ahead of me, I got rewarded for it! My efforts at prayers have been answered! Whatever I left behind has gone waste!" .
- Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) said," Wealth is the ailment of the faith and the learned are its healers. If you find a healer suffering from the same ailment, then don't consider him righteous! A learned person who has avarice for wealth, should not be trusted.. One should understand that when such a person cannot benefit himself, how could he be of benefit to others.

THE FUTILE BELIEFS OF THE WORLD

THE SECOND TRAIT

The evil effects of the love for the world are more severe than that of the love for wealth and riches. This love remains latent within the person. Some wrongly believe that they don't have this failing in them. But on deep reflection one realizes that this trait is engrained in their natures.

In fact this defect is the root of all the defects in a person. This involves a person in grave difficulties. A person becomes selfish and he starts liking sycophancy. The faith in Allah's Greatness diminishes in his heart Trust on the worldly things strengthens and

goes to the extent of making a person infidel. The only remedy for this is that a person must turn his attention towards Allah and should understand that the ultimate profit or loss from any activity rests with the Almighty's Wish. The benefits derived from the world by any person are transient. They will dissipate fast. They should take lesson from the lives of those who ruled the world for a while and death brought them Retribution for all the power and pelf enjoyed by them. In contrast to this, knowledge and action of a righteous person remain in perpetuity.

Someone asked Hazrat Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.), " O Master! What action is most valuable in the eyes of Allah?"

The Imam (a.s.) replied, " After the obedience of the Prophet (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.), the most valuable act of a person in the eyes of Allah is his aversion to the world!".

The first sin ever committed by a creature has been pride. It was Satan's pride that made him refrain from prostrating to Adam (a.s.) and thereby rendering himself an infidel.

The second sin ever was avarice. Adam (a.s.) and Hawwa (a.s.) committed this sin by eating the forbidden fruit. This has created the instinct of avarice in the progeny of Adam (a.s.).

The third sin was jealousy that was first perpetrated by Qabeel. Feeling jealous of his brother Habeel, he assassinated him.

Now the sin of desire for women commenced. This extended to love for power, love for comforts, love of evil thoughts, love of superiority over others, love for wealth and riches. All these seven evil instincts in man have their root in the love for the world. The prophets (a.s.) and wise men have condemned these instincts in man.

The worldliness is of two distinct types. The first type of worldliness limits one to be contented with what one achieves. The second type of worldliness is because of the instinct of greed and avarice in the person. This worldliness is abhorrent. Man should keep away from pride, avarice and jealousy. Pride is only for the Creator, man has to be humble and down-to-earth. Because of the humility of man, he has been endowed with the wealth and immeasurable bounties of the Earth! Allah has made the earth the repository of invaluable jewels. He has made man from the very soil of the Earth! He has given the singular privilege to the man that He ordered the Angels to prostrate to Adam (a.s.)!

The fire, which had the instinct of rebelliousness was used by Allah to create Satan.. Therefore man must necessarily be humble and docile for the very reason that he has been made from the soil!

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that a polite person should not look for a vantage place when he attends a meeting. He should always try to be in a place that is slightly

lower than his own status in the society. He should take precedence over others in greeting them. If he is better informed in any matter, he should abstain from giving an impression that he is more knowledgeable. He should avoid debate to prove his own point of view.

THE SEVENTH FRUIT
SUPERIORITY OF HUMILITY

Humility is the best of all the human traits. One should always bear in his mind that Greatness is all for Allah only. The more humble a person, the more he shall be endowed with the bounties of Allah. The earth in its humility is a repository of the jewels and other invaluable resources , it helps in the production of innumerable fruits and flowers.. Similarly, man, who has been made from the humble soil, had the privilege of the angels prostrating to him and is endowed with an intellect superior to all the creations. Because the fire is rebellious by instinct, Satan has been created from it. Man should therefore adopt humility and patience in all circumstances. He should refrain from pride and prejudice craving for ascendancy over others. He should never brag about his pedigree. He should always bear in mind that his beginning has been as tiny as a drop of the semen. For many months the menstrual fluids in the womb of his mother sustained him. He should know that he carries impurities in his body like the blood, phlegm and feces. Whenever he throws out any of these impurities, he himself feels revulsion. After death man gets reduced to such a state that nothing else in the world can be more repulsive. If a cadaver of a dead person is left to rot, it will be infested with such vermin that no other dead animal would attract. One who has to face all these eventualities, has to adopt an attitude of humility in his lifetime.. The more a man is wise and learned, the more likelihood of his adopting humility in his attitude to life. Man attains superiority over his fellow human beings by being humble and considerate in his approach to them. This is evident from the lives of the Prophets (a.s.) of yore and their Vicegerents.

Because Greatness is all for Allah, man has to be humility personified. The more a person shows humility in his attitude, the more acceptable he will be to Allah. If a person endeavors to assume false greatness, he will fall the more in the abyss of depravity!

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that Allah has appointed two angels whose function is to elevate the persons who adopt humility in their lives and to degrade those who strive to achieve superiority through proud and selfish motives.
- Allah sent a Revelation to Hazrat Dawood (a.s.),” O Dawood (a.s.)! While I endow those who supplicate to Me in humility, I humiliate those who are proud!”
- It is mentioned in the traditions that Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) received a Revelation from Allah, “ O Moosa (a.s.)! Are you aware why I have made you superior over others and termed you *Kaleem* (a friend)?” Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) said, “ I know not, why?”

Allah replied, “ I have observed all your people, but I found none equal to your humility and modesty of nature. O Moosa (a.s.)! While prostrating to Me, you rub your cheeks on the ground! I have liked this attitude of your’s!”

- It is narrated through a reliable source that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, “ It is high humility not to mind sitting at a place not commensurate with one’s status at a meeting of men! It is humility in the disposition of a person that makes him take precedence in greeting others and avoids quarreling with people even if they are wrong in their stand. A person with humility doesn’t feel flattered hearing praises from others.
- Imam Reza (a.s.) defined humility in a person as the habit of discharging the rights of others as he would have his own rights fulfilled!”
- Someone asked, “ What is the gauge for humility? When can we term a person as humble?” The Imam (a.s.) said, “ There are several degrees of humility. One is that a person doesn’t rate himself more than what he is worth. He avoids pride and prejudice. He treats others the same way as he expects them to treat him. Even if he receives illtreatment from others, he treats them with kindness. He suppresses anger and is generous to a fault. Allah considers such humble persons His friends!”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) noticed a person in Medina carrying something he had bought. The man was taken aback when he saw the Imam.. The Imam said, “ You have made some purchases for your family and are carrying home the burden. yourself! If I had not cared for the stares of the people of this town, I should, like you, have carried my purchases home myself!”
- One day Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) was riding on his way. He noticed some persons engaged in having their meal. The men asked the Imam (a.s.) to join them in the fare. He said, “ If I was not fasting, I would certainly have partaken of your food!” When he arrived at his house the Imam (a.s.) ordered preparation of delicacies for the persons he met at the roadside. He sent for them and shared the repast with the persons.
- It is narrated that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) advised Imam Hassan (a.s.), “ Adopt humility. It is best of all supplications!”
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, “ One who adopted humility and modesty Allah will endow him with respect and nobility.”
- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) used to say that no Arab and Qureish has any superiority if he is not humble in his demeanor..

THE HUMILITY OF NAJASHI

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that when Janab Jafar e Tayyar bin Abi Talib was at the court of Najashi, he was once called by the monarch to his presence. He found that the king was seated on the bare ground. Hazrat Jafar e Tayyar felt awed finding the monarch sitting the way he did.

Najashi said, “ Thank God that He gave victory to your Prophet (a.s.) over his enemies! My greetings to you on this occasion!”
He asked, “ Your majesty! How you came to know of this?”

Najashi said, “ My agents have brought this news to me. They also informed the names of the persons who have been taken captive. The place where the battle took place is called *Badr.* At that place lots of *Salvadora Persica* trees are growing. I feel as if the place is in my view!”
Hazrat Jafar e Tayyar asked him, “ Why are you squatting on the ground?”
Najashi said, “ O Jafar! Of the Commandments that Allah gave to Hazrat Eeesa (a.s.), one is that when people receive a fresh endowment from Him, they should express humility and modesty. Now that Allah has endowed this Blessing, about which I have just informed you, It is imperative on me that I manifest humility in my action!”

When the Prophet (a.s.) was informed about what transpired between Hazrat Jafar e Tayyar and the king of Abyssinia, he said, “ Humility enhances respect! Be humble and submissive before Allah! Charity begets prosperity! Do lot of charity, that Allah bestows Kindness on you! Forgive the mistakes of others, it will enhance your respect! If you are generous to a fault, Allah will enhance your respect!”

- Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.) says that a person who recognizes the rights of a *Momin* and respects him, Allah will enhance his respectability. One who adopts an attitude of humility with a *Momin,* will be counted by Allah among the *Sadiqeen* (the truthful ones). He will be recognized as a *Shia of the Ahl e Bayt.”*

HUMILITY & LOWLINESS

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) told to Imam Hussain (a.s.) that in the eyes of Allah the best supplication is humility and no pedigree is of any value but the humility of a person.

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) says that when Hazrat Nooh (a.s.) boarded the ark and other things were loaded, they set sail. At this moment Allah addressed the mountains that He wished to land the boat on any one of them. Every mighty mountain thought that it would have the privilege of the landing of the Ark. But the *Mount Judi,* the smallest of the mounts, that was in the vicinity of *Najaf e Ashraf,* thought that it was insignificant when compared to the other mighty mountains and had no chance of being a part of such an important event. Allah liked the humility of *Mount Judi* and the Ark landed there!
Hazrat Ali (a.s.) was visited by one of his companions one day. The Imam (a.s.) treated him with much courtesy and attention. He ordered *Qanbar,* the Imam (a.s.)’s attendant, to arrange a repast for the guest. *Qanbar* laid the table and brought water for washing the hands and a towel for drying them. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) took the pitcher of water from *Qanbar’s* hand and wanted to help the guest wash his hands. The guest said politely, “ O Master! How is it possible that the slave makes the master do this service!” Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ What if my Master and Creator gets pleased if I do this service for you!?”

Hearing these words the guest was obliged to get his hands washed by Hazrat Ali (a.s.). After helping the guest wash his hands, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) addressed his son, *Mohammed bin Hanafiah,* to help the guest's son wash his hands that the status of the father and the son was not equated. He also added that if the father was not with the son, he would himself have helped him wash his hands..

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) once went to a shop and asked the vendor to show some cloaks. The man asked, " O *Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)!* What quality of cloaks you desire to buy?" Hearing this, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) moved away from the shop. The reason was that the man addressed him as *Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)* and that he was aware of the status of the visitor. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) now went to another shop. At that moment the owner of the shop was away and his young son was attending to the customers. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked the young man to give two cloaks. He bought one for two and the other for three Dirhams. Now Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked *Qanbar* to take the cloak worth three Dirhams and kept the inferior garment for himself. *Qanbar* said, " O Master! Please take the better garment for your own use!" Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " It is always the youth who deserve to use better things. You must therefore use the better cloak of the two! The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has verily said,' Provide to the slave the type of garments you yourselves wear and give them the food that you eat!,"

The sleeves of Hazrat Ali (a.s.)'s cloak were slightly longer than his arms. He got them cut to size and said that the cloth would be useful for making caps for some needy persons.

After a while the owner returned to his shop and learned that *Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)* had purchased the cloaks from there. He went to the presence of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and said, " O *Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)!* My son didn't recognize you and has derived a profit of two Dirhams from you in the bargain! I therefore request you to kindly take back these two Dirhams." Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said," We agreed to the price he quoted! The deal was struck! Also, bear it in mind that we are the *Ahl e Bayt (* people of the Prophet (a.s.)'s Household)! Whatever we give, we never take back!"

THE HUMILITY OF THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

It is narrated from an authentic source that Mohammed bin Muslim went one day to the presence of Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.). He was partaking of his meal at the time. The Imam (a.s.) asked the visitor to join him over the fare. After finishing the lunch the Imam (a.s.) said, " O Mohammed! My Grand Father, the Prophet of Islam (a.s.), from

the day he was ordained the Prophet (a.s.) till his last breath, never reclined on a bolster during his meals. By Allah! He never took support of anything while eating food. Never did the Prophet (a.s.) eat bread made out of wheat for three consecutive days! From the day he was ordained the Prophet (a.s.) he never ate his fill of wheat bread! I don't mean to say that it was not within his means to afford good food! He used to give away hundreds of good camels in charity! If he wished, he could have ordered the best of victuals for himself! In fact *Jibrael* came thrice to offer to the Prophet (a.s.) the keys to the treasures of the world and said that if he accepted the wealth his status on the Day of Reckoning would not change a wee-bit! But the Prophet (a.s.), in absolute humility, refused to accept the offer every time it was made to him! The Prophet (a.s.) always tried his best to take care of the needs of persons coming to him for help. If at anytime he did not have the means, he would tell the person in absolute humility that he would attend to his needs as soon as he could! Whenever he was endowed with any bounties, he never hoarded them. Many a time he used to vouch Heaven to his visitors and Allah acceded to his wish!"

THE HUMILITY OF HAZRAT ALI

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Hazrat Ali (a.s.) used to feed meat and wheat bread to the poor. But at home he used to eat dry barley bread with olive oil. He always preferred hardships for himself. During his 25 years of Vicegerency, he never lived in a house made of properly tempered bricks. He never held a small piece of land for his own use. He did not leave behind any property as legacy for his children. He had no savings other that the 700 Dirhams that he kept for buying a slave girl to serve the womenfolk at home! None other could offer supplications as he did. Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) used to keep aside the book of Hazrat Ali (.a.s.)'s Supplications expressing his inability to act on them!

- It is narrated that *Hazrat Fidda,* Hazrat Fatima (a.s.)'s slave-girl, brought a sealed bag to Hazrat Ali (a.s.). He opened the seal and brought out dry bread and crusts from it. *Umro ibne Harith* was with Hazrat Ali (a.s.) at that time. He told in a sad tone to *Fiida, "* It would have been better if you had sieved the crusts!" *Fidda* replied, " The reason for putting on the seal is that no such thing was done by anyone to the contents of the bag!"
- It is narrated authentically that *Sawaid bin Ghafla* came to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) on the day of Eid. He noticed that there was some flour and dry bread in a bowl soaked in milk. He asked, " O Master! You eat the same food even on festive occasions?" He replied, " Eid is for one who is sure of pardon for his past sins!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrated that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) used to carry the firewood and containers of water for his home on his own shoulders. He used to sweep the house everyday. Hazrat Fatima (a.s.) used to grind the flour and knead it herself for baking the bread.
- It is narrated that one day Hazrat Ali (a.s.) bought fresh dates in Kufa . He tied the fruit in the lapel of his shawl and was proceeding towards his home. Some companions met him on the way and offered to carry his burden. The Imam (a.s.)

said, “ The right of carrying the family’s burden rests with the head of the family!” Then he added, “ If a person of distinction carries the weight of his family’s requirements, his distinction doesn’t diminish in any manner whatsoever!”

- It is recorded that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) used to walk bare-footed on five occasions. On these occasions he used to carry his footwear in his left hand. He would go to the Mosque barefooted on *Idd al Fitr, Idd al Adha* and the *Friday Congregations.* The Imam (a.s.) would also go barefooted when he visited a sick person. He also went with bare feet while attending the funeral procession of a dead person. He used to say that one has to be barefooted while attending to Allah’s tasks!
- It is narrated that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) used to visit the market place all alone.. During these walks if he found a stranger who had lost his way, the Imam (a.s) would guide him. When he noticed old and feeble persons on the way, he would offer his help and support to them. If he noticed any person reciting the Quran incorrectly, he would guide the person to recite it correctly. Then he would himself recite a verse which says,” We have apportioned the abode in the Hereafter for those who do not want dissension and aggrandizement in the land; for the virtuous good awaits in the Hereafter.”
- Ibrahim ibne Abbas narrates that he did not meet a humbler person than Imam Ali ar Reza (a.s.). He was never harsh to anyone. He would never interrupt a person till he completed his talk. He would never turn down the request of a needy person. The Imam (a.s.) never sat with his feet stretched towards any person and also never reclined on a bolster while meeting people. He never reprimanded his slaves and servants. The Imam (a.s.) was never seen laughing loudly. He used always to share his food with his servants and slaves. He slept little and used to be busy praying in the nights. The Imam (a.s.) used to fast on most days. He was very charitable and generally he would do this in the silence and darkness of the nights that people did not know who their benefactor was!

THE EIGHTH FRUIT

PENURY- BOTH CONTEMPTIBLE & PRAISEWORTHY

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that the first to enter the Heaven will be the *faqirs* or the impecunious persons. When they are admitted to the Heaven, people will wonder why they were allowed to enter without any questioning. Then the *faqirs* would say that they needed not to render any account that they were neither king nor had any high ranks in the world. They had no wealth to be responsible for apportioning it. They were busy in the world supplicating to Allah and awaited their call.

One should know that *faqr* or penury is of two types. One is *Faqr il Allah* or Penury in the way of God; the other is *faqr il annaas* or penury to impress and take advantage of

people and ask for alms. This *faqr* is despiceable. This *faqr* makes a person avaricious. As people earn reward for expending their wealth in Allah's way, similarly there is reward for those who spend their lives with patience and forbearance while in penury. The reward, in fact, is greater for such persons than for the rich and charitable. Because riches generally take one towards evil and mischief but *faqr* keeps a person's attention riveted towards the remembrance of Allah. If Allah had not created *faqr* in the world, then the superior trait of patience and resignation would never have been practiced.

The question of *faqr* is very delicate to answer. Why Allah had to create *faqr?* Why has He given people the tendency to commit sin? If the instinct of sin was not there, then how would one get the reward for shunning sins? It is advisable not to delve in these thoughts. Even the Prophet (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.) have advised people not to delve too deeply in the matter..

PENURY & OPULENCE

It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the pious men of penury will see the Heaven forty years ahead of the pious opulent persons.. The Imam then cited a simile that the impecunious and opulent persons will be like two boats anchored on a wharf. One boat laden with merchandise and the other void of anything.. The person on the empty boat would walk away without paying any duties and taxes and the master of the boat with merchandise will have to give account of the goods carried on board before he is allowed to go ashore!

- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that man hates two things. One is the thought of death and the other is the scarcity of wealth. This, despite the fact that death relieves the person of all the cares of the world and the scarcity of wealth makes one less accountable on the Day of Reckoning!
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " Two things kill a person. First, the fear of poverty and indigence and secondly, the desire for status and recognition."
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) said, " Don't belittle the *faqirs* amongst the *Shias* of Ali (a.s.). On the Day of Judgement each one of them will intercede for so many persons that the number will be equal to the population of the two big tribes of *Rabiah* and *Mudar*.
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that " The hardships in this world are the Endowments of Allah. For the pious Allah has stored penury in His Treasury!"
- One tradition says that penury is a trust from Allah. One who keeps his penury to himself, he will get reward equivalent to one who has fasted on all days and prayed throughout the nights all his life. One who expresses his impecunious position to a person who is capable of ameliorating his situation, but fails to do it, it will be tantamount to killing the person. It will not be killing someone with a sharp lethal instrument, but it will be killing him by way of hurting his psyche.
- The stronger the faith of a person, the more his means of livelihood will decrease. The Imam (a.s.) said, " If men were not pleading with Allah with humility, even

then He would have made it difficult for people to make the ends meet. Allah has created the world as a place of warning and trial for people to face hardships with equanimity.

- In another tradition it is said, " Allah has not apportioned the false wealth for our *Shias.* He has provided sustenance for their maintenance. They shall not receive more than that..However much they travel in the West and the East.."
- Then said, " On the Day of Judgement, Allah will give attention to our impecunious *Shias* as if He is commiserating with them. "
- In another tradition it is recorded that the way a brother makes excuses to another brother, Allah too will commiserate with the people saying," I have not made you impecunious in the world that I considered you inferior beings. You shall now see how I endow you! Whoever has been kind to you in the world, you may catch hold of his hand and lead him to the Heaven!" At that moment a *faqir* would say, " O Allah! The worldly people were enjoying themselves in the world. They were marrying pretty damsels, they were riding pedigree steeds, they ate sumptuous food, wore expensive apparel. Bestow upon us the same privileges now!" Allah will say in reply, " O *faqir!* You and your friends shall be endowed seventy times more than those people enjoyed!"

THE TALE OF A FAQIR & AN OPULENT PERSON

- It is narrated that a rich person dressed in expensive garments and visited the Prophet (a.s). Then came another person dressed in much worn clothes and sat near the first person. The person wearing expensive garments drew together his cloak and moved a bit away from the new arrival. The Prophet (a.s.) noticed this and asked him, " Are you scared that the person's penury would overpower you?" The man replied, "No!" The Prophet (a.s.) asked, " Are you afraid that the person's soiled apparel would soil your expensive clothes?" The Man replied, " No!" The Prophet (a.s.) asked, " Are you afraid that the person would snatch away your opulence?" The man replied, " O Prophet (a.s.)! Not at all!" The Prophet (a.s.) now asked, " Why then, you behaved the way you did?" The man said, " I have one very bad companion! That is my subconscious ego! It says that all my faults are virtues! As a penance I now bestow on the *faqir* half my wealth!" The prophet (a.s.) asked the *faqir, "* Do you accept this offer?" He replied, " No!" the rich person asked him, " Why do you refuse my offer?" He replied, " I am afraid the wealth might inflict me with the same ailment that you suffer from!"
- It is narrated in the traditions that Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) received a Revelation from Allah, " O Moosa (a.s.)! When penury comes to you, welcome it as a trait of the virtuous! When opulence comes to you then ask it whether it is the punishment during the worldly life for the wrong deeds you had committed earlier!"
- Mohammed bin al Hussain Khazar says that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) told to him, " O Mohammed! When you visit the market, you see good quality fruits and vegetables on sale and you realize that you don't have the means to buy them. Do you get a craving to purchase them?" He replied, " O Imam (a.s.)! I do feel the

desire to buy those good things!" The Imam (a.s.) said, " For everything that you wish to have, and don't get, an entry will be made in your account of good deeds for the Day of Judgement!"

- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) said, " Allah observes,' I have not made the affluent poor because they are contemptible in My eyes.. I have not made *faqirs* rich because they are dear to me.' The rich should brood over this fact. The *faqirs* are the instruments of test for the affluent. If the impecunious people were not there in the world, the rich would not have qualified for going to the Heaven."
- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) narrates that one day the Prophet (a.s) was travelling. On the way a person with a flock of camels met him. The Prophet (a.s.) asked him to give some milk. The man said," The milk that is in the container is for the use of my family in the evening and that which is in the udders of the camels is for use in the morning!" The Prophet (a.s.) offered a prayer for the welfare and prosperity of the man. After a little distance the Prophet (a.s.) came across a man with a flock of sheep. The Prophet (a.s.) also asked him to give some milk. The man presented the quantity of milk available with him, and arranged for milking some more animals, instantly.. He also presented a sheep to the Prophet (a.s.).. He then asked the Prophet (a.s.) if he wished anything else from him. The prophet (a.s.) prayed for him thus, " O Allah! Bless the man with the livelihood he requires!" The companions asked the Prophet (a.s.), " O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! The man who refused to comply with your request, you prayed for increase in his wealth and progeny. We too wish to be blessed in the same way. But the man who complied with your request, you prayed for him differently, that we didn't like." The Prophet (a.s.) said, " lesser the worldly benefits for one is always the better! It is fine if the needs of a person are fulfilled. But if he gets riches in excess, they might make him forgetful of Allah!" the Prophet (a.s.) then prayed, " O Allah! Give sustenance to Mohammed and his progeny sufficient for their upkeep. Give them the capability to refrain from *haram* (illegitimate) acts and give them wherewithal to meet their essential needs. Give more riches and progeny to our enemies!"

A *Momin* sometimes feels sad that Allah has made him impecunious. He must know that his penury is the cause of bringing him closer to Allah. When a *momin* gets riches in plenty, he feels happy. But he is oblivious of the fact that the riches might take him away from Allah!

Allah says, " The *momin,* happiest, and closest to Him is one who performs good deeds, offers good supplication and who is not unpopular amongst his fellow men. He earns livelihood in accordance with his needs and leads a contented life. He leaves the transitory world early, leaves behind him little worldly legacy and has few to mourn his death!"

SINCERITY OF ACTION

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, “ O Abu Dharr! Happy are the people who shun the world and have their attention riveted on the Hereafter! They consider the place for taking rest and the dust their linen. They consider water as a substitute for fragrance. They feel that the Holy Book is their raiment and supplication their garment! They think that their harvest for the Hereafter is the good deeds and the worldly harvest is their wealth and the progeny! One who strives for the Hereafter, Allah will provide him the means of Salvation! To the contrary, one who strives only for the worldly gains, he will be in the same predicament as the Satan. He will not reap any benefits in the Hereafter.”

This highlights that the actions of the hypocrites, who do good deeds to get the appreciation of the people, will get adulation and benefits in this world only and no rewards in the Hereafter. The persons whose actions are sincere, might not get any appreciation from their compatriots in this world. However, compensation and reward awaits them in the Hereafter.

- It has been narrated in the traditions that when a *momin* attains a high level of piety, he stops getting dreams during his sleep.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that no one thanks a *momin* for his good deeds. He may not become popular among his fellow men because he is not interested in such popularity. His aim is only to please Allah. and his good deeds are always destined towards the Heaven. On the other hand, the good deeds of an unbeliever only receive the appreciation of his fellow men. The reason for this is that he does good deeds to please other men.
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) narrates that the people didn’t thank the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) for his kindness and , to the contrary, they used to repudiate his commandments. Similarly they refuse to obey us, the *Ahl al Bayt.* Also, the good deeds of our *Shia momins* don’t get any appreciation from others. Despite their good deeds, people are antagonistic towards them. The hardships caused by people to Yahya bin Zakaria (a.s.), Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) and Hussain bin Ali (a.s.) illustrate the hardships inflicted by people on them.
- A tradition highlights that recitation of the Quran is superior to the recitation of the supplications. It is strongly exhorted that one should cultivate the habit (*Sha-aar)* of reciting the Quran. *Sha-aar* is the garment that is worn outside and

dua (supplication) is like the under-garment. that is closer to his self.. Man can make access to either the Quran or to supplication, as per his wish..

- The pious people will not derive so much salvation from supplications than those who cry and lament.
- It is said: The wise among *momins* are those who remember death and prepare well for it..
- It is narrated that a person brought 12 Dirhams to the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) as a gift. The Prophet (a.s.) told to Hazrat Ali (a.s.), “ O Ali (a.s.)! Buy a cloak for me from these Dirhams.” Hazrat Ali (a.s.) went to the market and brought a very fine cloak

from there. The Prophet (a.s.) said that he didn't want to wear the expensive cloak and asked him to fetch one not so costly. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) returned the cloak to the shop and fetched back the 12 Dirhams to the Prophet (a.s.). The Prophet (a.s.) himself went out to buy a cloak. On the way he found a woman crying. He went near her and asked why she was crying. She said that her master had given her four Dirhams to buy some merchandise. She had lost the money on the way and was worrying what reply she could give to her master for the loss. The Prophet (a.s.) gave her four Dirhams and proceeded further. He selected a cloak worth four Dirhams and started back for home. On the way he met an old Dervish who was dressed in tatters and was begging for a new set of dress. The Prophet (a.s.) gave him his new cloak. When he went further he once again found the same maid crying bitterly. When he inquired the reason for her crying, she said that it was quite sometime that she left home and was now worried what reply she would give to her master for the delay. The Prophet (a.s.) said, " I shall accompany you to your master's house." When they reached the destination, the master said, " O Prophet (a.s.)! Why did you take the trouble of coming? I not only condone her delay, but I set her free from today!" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " How auspicious were the Dirhams of that virtuous man that they fulfilled the need of a needy person, a person in tatters got a new dress and a slave maid earned her freedom!"

- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, " O Abu Dharr! I swear by Allah's Greatness that He has told me that a *momin* who cried in prayer would be provided a palace in the Heaven the like of which will not be provided to none other than the prophets (a.s.)!" " O Abu Dharr! The sign of a man of piety is that he prostrates in recognition of Allah's Greatness and cries." *Giria* or crying is of different types:

1. *Giria* while praying for increase in the means of livelihood.
2. :*Giria* to be spared from getting consigned to the Hell on account of the sins committed.
3. *Giria* while supplicating to Allah for award of a place in the Heaven.
4. *Giria* for attaining nearness to Allah. Such a person loves Allah although the materialistic life has created a distance between the creature and the Creator! This *Giria* is the noblest of all other types.

- " O Abu Dharr! If one keeps Allah in view while performing any act, and performs it to earn the pleasure of the Creator, even to the extent of taking a morsel of food with the thought that the energy derived would enable him to offer prayer to Him! It would be the greatest of the acts of piety when a person does everything with the sole purpose of earning the pleasure of Allah!"
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " Blessed and worthy of a hundred praises are those creatures of Allah who are not known to the people nor they strive to gain popularity in the society. Only such persons are recognized by Allah. He will give them Reward for their noble intent. These people are the beacons of the path of righteousness. Their hearts are radiant with the light of faith. They fully understand the futility and transience of the world. They strive to attain the Heaven and cry with the fear of the Hell. O Abu Dharr! Belief in the existence of the Heaven and the Hell is mandatory. Denying their existence is heresy and infidelity."
- One heretic asked some questions of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.).

THE FIRST QUESTION: How is it possible that the fruit trees in the Heaven would continuously bear fruit despite the inmates consuming them copiously?

ANSWER: The Imam (a.s.) said," It is like lighting thousands of lamps from one lamp and the light of the first lamp doesn't diminish.

THE SECOND QUESTION: It is believed that people will not defecate in the Heaven. Then what will happen to the offal?

ANSWER: The Imam (a.s.) said, " The excreta will be discharged from the bodies in the form of fragrant perspiration."

Hearing these replies the infidel embraced Islam.

- Someone asked Hazrat Bilal a question about the Heaven. Hazrat Bilal said, " I have heard the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) say that the compound wall of the Heaven is built of gold, silver and bricks of precious stones mixed with musk, ambergris and saffron. The Heaven has several gateways. The gate called *Darwaza e Rehmat* (the Gate of Blessings) is made of red rubies. *Darwaza e Sabr* (the Gate of Forbearance) is made of yellow rubies. The *Darwaza e Shukr (*the Gate of Thankfulness) is made of white rubies. The biggest and the most imposing gate to the Heaven will be used only by the revered persons who spent their entire lives in prayer of Allah.. At this gate there are canals from where the men of piety (*Momineen*) will go sightseeing in boats.. Allah will provide opportunities to all the *Momins* to qualify for entry into the Heaven.
- Abu Salat Harvi asked Imam Reza (a.s.), " O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! Do the Heaven and the Hell exist now?"
- The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Without any doubt!"
- Abu Salat said, " People say that Allah will create the Heaven and the Hell and that they don't exist now!"
- The Imam (a.s.) replied, " He who says so is not one of us! The Prophet (a.s.), on the night of *Meraj (*the Night of the Holy Prophet's Accession), traveled through the Heaven and saw the Hell!" Then the Imam (a.s.), referring to several verses of the Holy Book and the Traditions proved that denying the existence of the Heaven and the Hell would be tantamount to not believing in the Quran, the Prophet (a.s.) and his Vicegerents. A person who holds such disbelief is a *kafir* and infidel.

THE PEOPLE OF THE HELL

It is essential to believe that the *Kuffar* (the non-believers) would always live in the Hell. They will not have any respite from the Retribution! Barring the *Shias* the people of all other sects, who are wise and had been instructed on the *Hujjat (* the Right Path), continue with their *ta-assub*(prejudice), will ever live in the Hell. The ignorant women and persons with weak minds who cannot distinguish between the right and the wrong, but have the love for the *Ahl al Bayt* in their hearts will receive the Pardon from Allah.

The Shias who are eligible for the Intercession, although they have committed major sins, might be saved from the Hellfire by Allah.. A person who refused to perform the mandatory practices viz: *Salat (* Prayers), fasting, *Haj, Zakat* and denied the existence of the Heaven and the Hell is an infidel and will ever be in the Hell.

ABOUT THE HELL

It is narrated from Abu Baseer that he inquired of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! My heart has gone extremely callous! I request you to tell me about Allah's Retribution in the Hereafter!"

The Imam (a.s.) said, " The life in the Hereafter has no end! One day Jibrael came to the Pprophet (a.s.) in a ghastly appearance. The Prophet (a.s.) asked him, " O Jibrael! Why are you so morose today?" Jibrael replied, " O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! Allah has ordered blowing of air on the Hell for a thousand years. As a result of that, the Hell turned white. Again a similar order was given and, as a consequence of a thousand years' blowing of air, the Hell turned red. The order was repeated for a third time and, thereafter, Hell turned black. As a result of these operations, the juices of the sinners and the private parts of the adulterers emitted dirt that is called *Dareeh*. This dirt, boiled in the Hellfire, developed such foul smell that if a drop of it was put on the earth, the entire population thereon would perish.. In the Hell there is a chain seventy yards in length that will be tied round the necks of the people of the Hell. If even one ring of the chain comes to the earth, it's heat would kill all the living beings on the surface..
The garments of the inmates of Hell will smell foul that even one dropping to the earth would cause the death of all its inhabitants!

After this, Jibrael and the Prophet (a.s.) started crying grievously. At this moment an angel was sent by Allah.. He said, "Allah sends his greetings to both of you and says that He will protect you from sins that attract Retribution." After this event, whenever Jibrael came to the Prophet (a.s.), he was in a jovial and happy mood.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " O Abu Baseer! The infidels and the hypocrites will learn of Allah's Retribution when they get consigned to the Hell. In great pain they will strive for a thousand years to climb up. Reaching the edge they will be hit by the angels with fiery maces on their heads. With these blows they will slide back to the bottom of the Hell. The skins of their bodies will fall apart with the heat. . They will get new skins that will burn and fall apart. This torturous process will continue for ever..

The Imam (a.s.) said, " O Abu Baseer! Is what I have told you sufficient or you wish me to tell you more?"

Abu Baser said, " O Master! Please tell me no more! Hearing about the Retribution my heart is shivering!"

THE FOOD OF THE INMATES OF THE HELL

Omro bin Tabit narrates that Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said, “ The inmates of the Hell will plead with the Hell like dogs and wolves to be spared of the Retribution! O Omro! What will be the condition of those who will never find any respite from the Retribution.. They will be hungry, thirsty, blind, deaf and dumb and burning in the Hellfire! They will be repentant of the past sins. There won’t be anyone to commiserate with them. They will get *Hameem* from the Hell to drink in place of water and will be given *Zaqoom* to eat. They will receive blows from fiery maces on their heads. Angry angels would tie them up harshly in chains and drag them, face down, through burning embers. Their prayers and supplications will not be heeded by anyone.. They will pray for death to escape the Retribution, but death would elude them.. After all this Retribution, they will have one more severe test in store for them..
The Imam (a.s.) continued, “ When *Sadeed e Jahannum* is brought to them for drinking, its heat would peel away the skin of their faces. As soon as they drink the *Sadeed,* their entrails would get shredded and get discharged through their anus.. It will be like a rivulet of puss and blood. They will cry so much in pain that their tears would run like rivers. The tears would then dry and in their place the eyes would start shedding blood. There would be so much of blood flowing that it would be possible to sail boats in that.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, “ The Hell has seven gates. From the first gate Pharoah, Haaman, Qaroun, that is the First, Second and the Third would enter! From the second gate the hypocrites and the infidels would enter the Hell. The third gate would be earmarked for the *Bani Ommaya.* None else would use that gate. The fourth gate of the Hell is *Saqr* and the fifth is *Badia.* Those who enter through *Badia,* will descend for seventy years and will again be pushed upwards.. This is the largest gate and is the most difficult..
- It is mentioned in the traditions that the fire in our world is a part of the seventieth part of hellfire that had been cooled seventy times with water before coming down to If this wasn’t the case, then the heat wouldn’t have spared any life on the earth.. On the Day of Judgement, the Hell would be brought to the *Maidan e Mahshar (* the ground where people will have to account for their past deeds!) The *Sirat* would be suspended over this ground. There will be so much hue and cry from the Hell that the angels and the Prophets (a.s.) would start pleading with fear.!

THE STAGES OF THE HELL— GHASSAQ, JAHEEM ETC.

In is narrated in a tradition that there is a valley in the Hell by the name of *Ghassaq.* There are 330 palaces in this valley. Every palace has 300 rooms. Every room has 40 corners. At every corner in the rooms there is a snake that has 330 scorpions in its belly. Every scorpion has 330 pouches of venom. This venom is so lethal that if a drop falls in the Hell, the inhabitants there would all perish!

- It is narrated that there are seven stages of the Hell. The first stage is *Jaheem.* If the inmates stand on the rocks here, their brains would start boiling with the heat radiated from the stones. The second stage of the Hell is *Lazaa.* Allah tells about this stage that it has excessive gravitational pull. It will pull the limbs of the hypocrites towards it. It will pull people towards itself who had been denying the Truth, had been unfairly amassing wealth and not giving to others their rights. The third stage of the Hell is *Saqr.* This is a fire that will not spare any flesh, skin, veins and bones. They will all be rendered to soot. From this soot Allah will again create bodies. There will emanate such a flame from this stage that it will render all the infidels black. There are 19 angels who are the *Muwakkil* or keepers of this stage of the Hell. The fourth stage of the Hell is *Hutma.* From here come flames as high as the ceilings of the houses. The flames would resemble camels of yellow color travelling with the wind. Whoever is consigned to the flames, would be instantly consumed by them.. It would be turned into a material like the collyrium. Allah will bring back the person to life once again and the flames would once again consume him. The fifth stage of the Hell is *Hawia*. The people will plead with the keeper of this stage for help. He will give to them a fiery pot full of puss to eat. With the heat of the pot, the skins of their faces would peel off and fall into the pots.
- Allah has therefore said, " For the cruel people we have readied a fire which will surround them from all sides. If they complain of thirst, they will be given water, which will resemble molten copper. When brought near their faces, it will scald them. It will be very bad water."
- For the people of the Hell there is a place of rest called *Mohil*. It is a type of fire. *Mohil* will be put into *Hawia* and it will keep descending for seventy thousand years in the fire. The skin that burns will be formed again, and this will be a continuous process. The sixth stage of the Hell is *Saeer.* This stage has 300 curtains of fire. With every curtain there are three hundred palaces of fire. There are 300 rooms in each of the palaces. In every room three hundred types or Retribution will be devised. Snakes, scorpions and chains of fire will be there in plenty.
- Therefore, Allah says" We have prepared for the infidels collars and chains."
- The seventh stage of the Hell is having a well. When its mouth is opened, innumerable flames would emerge from it. This is the most difficult of the stages of the Hell. There is a mount at the center of this stage called *Sa-aud. It is a mountain of copper and a canal of molten copper flows around it.* This is the place of maximum retribution in the Hell.

THE SAQR

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) narrates that *Saqr* is a valley in the Hell. From the day it has been created by Allah, it has never once 'breathed'. If it breathes equal to the hole in a needle, it would burn the entire population of living beings on the earth. The inmates of Hell are scared of its heat. There is a mount in this valley that awes the people of the Hell because of its extreme heat and foul smell. There is a passage in this mountain and the passage has a pit that is replete with putrid dirt and its stench is obnoxious even to the

inmates of the passage. In the pit there is a snake that emanates extremely foul smell. In the belly of the snake there are seven caskets.

- Ibne Abbas narrates that two Jews came to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and asked him where the Heaven and the Hell are located. Hazrat Ali (a.s.) replied that the Heaven is in the sky and the Hell is on the Earth.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) was asked about the meaning of *Falaq.* He replied that *Falaq* is one of the hottest part of the Hell..
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) had said, " On the way to *Meraj* I heard a horrendous sound. I felt scared and asked Jibrael about the sound. Jibrael replied, " O Mohammed (a.s.)! This is the sound of a stone that was hurled from the corner of the Hell seventy years ago. Today It has reached the bottom of the Hell.. The sound has come from the same stone." Eversince then, no one saw the Prophet (a.s.) laughing." The Prophet (a.s.) then added, " When I reached the first sky, the angels greeted me happily. But there was one angel who had a terrifying appearance. He too greeted me. He, however was not as pleasant and happy as the other angels.. I asked Jibrael, " How is this angel that looking at him gives one the scare!" Jibrael said, " O Mohammed (a.s.)! We the angels too are scared of looking at his face. His name of *Malik the Keeper of the Hell.* The day Allah gave him the charge of the Hell, and thereafter, he has never laughed. His anger at the inmates of the Hell keeps increasing by the day. Allah will order him to take revenge on the people of the Hell. O Mohammed (a.s.)! If ever *Malik* smiled, he would certainly have done so seeing you!" The Prophet (a.s.) said, ", I greeted him and he gave me the tiding of Heaven for me. I told to Jibrael,' The angels obey your orders.. Do ask him to show the Hell to me!' Malik therefore took aside the curtain of the Hell and exposed a portion of it. Flames came from the Hell reaching almost up to the sky! The sound and fury scared me and I asked Jibrael to order putting back of the curtain on the Hell. No sooner the curtain was put, the flames disappeared."
- It has been narrated in the traditions that the Verse of the Holy Book saying, 'Raiment of fire have been readied for the infidels' has been revealed with reference to *Bani Ommaiyah.* They will be surrounded so profusely by the Hellfire that it would appear as if they are wearing the garments of fire. Their lower lips would droop up to their navels. The upper lips would touch the tops of their heads. Allah then adds, " Put on them such scalding water that it burns their intestines and the innards. Fiery maces are in readiness for them. When they try to escape from the Hell, they will be beaten with the maces to force them retrace their steps back into the Hell. They will then be told, ' Taste the retribution of the Hellfire for your evil deeds!'"
- It is narrated in the traditions that those maces are so heavy that even if all the men and jinn together try, they would not be able to move them.
- It is narrated that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said for the sinners *Naqab-ha* has been prepared for them in the Hellfire. Their limbs will be bound with chains and they will be made to wear rings round their necks. They will be made to wear dresses of molten copper. They will be given cloaks of fire to wear. They will be totally deprived of cool breeze. Hardships shall be ever fresh for them. Neither their life will end nor will there be any diminution in the retribution faced by them.. They will plead with

Malice for mercy. He will reply, “ This retribution for you shall remain in perpetuity. It will never diminish!”

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that the Hell has a place that is so horrible that the inmates are scared to be there.. That place will be for all the tyrants and the enemies of the Ahl al Bayt. The easiest place in the Hell will be where the river of fire is located. The inmates will have slippers of fire in their feet. The heat of these slippers would boil the brains of the wearers like the food cooking in a pan. These persons would think that their retribution is the maximum. In fact, this punishment is lighter when compared with that meted out to the other inmates of the Hell..”
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, “ If there are a hundred thousand persons in the mosque and amongst them is an inmate of the Hell; then the entire concourse would be burnt and not one would survive!” Then the Prophet (a.s.) continued, “ In the Hell there are snakes equal in circumference to the neck of a camel. If a snake bites a person, he would be restless with pain for forty years. In the Hell there are similarly venomous scorpions. “
- Abdullah bin Abbas narrates that the Hell has seven doors. At every door there are seventy thousand hills. Every hill has seventy thousand ravines. Every ravine has seventy thousand crevices. Every crevice has seventy thousand rooms. There are seventy thousand snakes in every room. Every snake will be equal in length to the distance traveled in three days.. The snake has teeth as big as the date. These snakes would adhere to the flesh of the inmates of the Hell. When they try to run away from the snakes, they would fall into the canal of the Hell and keep falling down for forty years.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that Allah has not created any human being for whom He has not apportioned a place either in the Heaven or the Hell. When the inmates of the Heaven and those of the Hell reach their destination a herald would announce to the inmates of the Heaven to look at the Hell. They will get scared and worried. One angel would say,” O people of the Heaven! If you had been disobedient to Allah, your predicament too would have been the same!” Then the inmates of the Hell would be called by the herald,” Look at the comforts and conveniences of the inmates of the Heaven!” Then he would add, “ O unfortunate folk! If you were obedient to Allah, you too would have enjoyed all the privileges of the Heaven!”
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) has said that the Hell has seven stages. The last stage has seven caskets. One of the caskets has five persons from the times of the past Prophets (a.s.) and two from the time of the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) who have not professed faith in Allah.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that Allah has provided every individual a place in the Heaven or the Hell. The herald would ask the inmates of the Heaven to look at the inmates of the Hell. Finding them restless and suffering in the Hellfire, they will hear the herald calling, “ If you were disobedient to Allah, your predicament too would have been the same! Then the inmates of the Hell would be called by the herald to look at the people of the Heaven.. Observing the luxuries and comforts of the people of the Heaven, the inmates of Hell would start crying and lamenting. The Herald would add,” If you too were, doing good deeds, you would have enjoyed the same comforts now!”

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that when the inmates of the Heaven and the Hell go to their respective destinations, a herald would announce, " O people! Will you recognize Death if it comes before you?" They will all reply in unison that they would not be able to recognize Death! The Death would appear in the space between the Heaven and the Hell in the shape of a sheep with black and white skin. The Herald would say, " Look! This is the Death!" Then with Allah's orders the sheep would be slaughtered. Then the herald would announce, "O people of the Heaven and the Hell! Remain in the places allotted to you! Now there will be no death for you!"
- The Prophet said, " O Abu Dharr! Heaven is the place from where if a woman looks at the earth, the entire earth would glitter with the reflection of the radiant face like it reflects when there is the full moon!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " Heaven is the place the fragrance of which is spread over a distance equal to the distance traveled in a thousand years. Every *momin* in the Heaven is provided so well that if he invites all the men and the jinns, they would be completely sated and an equal quantity of the victuals would remain with him! The inmates of the Heaven would get all the bounties of the Heaven and every individual would get eight hundred virgins, four thousand non-virgins and two *Hoors al Ain!*

ABOUT HOOR AL AIN

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " O Abu Baseer! There is a canal in the Heaven on either bank of which are stationed maids. The *momin* who passes that way would select the maids who would willingly accompany him. Allah will create and station more maids in their place.

The *Hoor al Ain* are created with luminous (*Noorani)* soil. Their limbs would appear shining from within a thousand garments. The heart of the *momin* would be the mirror for the *Hoor al Ain.* Their hearts would be the *momin's* mirror. Their hearts would be clear and delicate and would be reflective. The talk of the *Hoor al Ain* would be so sweet that one would not have heard such sweet talk ever before. They will say, " We are durable and immortal! We have happiness and bounties in perpetuity.. Sorrow and care would never afflict us. We shall ever live in the Heaven and shall never be separated from it. Fortunate is the person who is born for us. If a single hair of ours is fixed in the sky, it would make the eyes of those who look at it blink.

THE DOORS OF THE HEAVEN

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) narrates that the Heaven has eight doors. One door is for the Prophets (a.s.) and the truthful ones (*the Siddiqeen).* The second is for the martyrs and the *Saleheen.* The other five doors are for our friends and *Shias* who believe in our

Vicegerency (*Imamat)* and help us. I shall stand near the *Bridge of Siraat* and pray for the safe passage of the *Shias* and our helpers. At that time a herald would call from the firmament, " We have accepted your prayers! You have the right to intercede on behalf of your *Shias!* Each of them too can intercede for seventy thousand of their friends and neighbors! The eighth door of the Heaven is for the other Muslims who do not have the slightest animosity towards the *Ahl al Bayt.* They will enter the Heaven through this door.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " Allah has made Friday as the day of bounties for the inmates of the Heaven because of the *momins.* On that day the angels would bring from Allah two garments for each *momin.* They will tell to the keeper of the Heaven, " Please take permission from so-and-so *Momin* for me to go to his presence!" The keeper will approach the *momin* and say, " O *momin* creature! Allah's angel is seeking your permission to meet you!" The *momin will ask the keeper, " What should I do?" The keeper would reply, " O* momin! Thank Allah! He has given you high honor that He has sent a messenger with His gift for you!" Then the angel would approach the *momin* and give him the two garments sent by Allah. One he would wear around his waist and the other around his shoulders. The angel would take the *momin* along with him and proceed to the *wada gah e Rehmat.* When all the *momins* reach that place in a similar fashion, then Allah will show to them His Radiance. They will all prostrate their heads in prayer. Then Allah would order them to raise their heads from the prostration that it was not the time for prayer! They will all say in unison " O Allah! How could we thank You for granting to us the bounties of the Heaven?" The reply will be, " You will be bestowed seventy times more bounties that you are receiving now! Every Friday you would receive seventy times more bounties than in the previous week!" Therefore Allah has said in the Holy Book," We have more bounties and miracles." Friday is the day of enhancement of the bounties. The eve of Friday is very illuminating and the day is very bright. The *momins* must keep themselves busy in prayer on the eve and the day of Friday. They must repeatedly utter the words *Subhan Allah, Allaho Aklbar wa la ilaha il Allah.* They should also recite *Alhamdu lillah* on the rosary and recite the *Durood Shareef* as much as they can.
- When the *momins* return from *the Muqaam e Rehmat* to the Heaven with the gift of the raiment from Allah, their consorts would say, " By the Great Allah, who has endowed us with a place in the Heaven, we have not found you as handsome as today. From where have you acquired these good looks?" The *momin* would say, " I have acquired these good looks from the light and Radiance of Allah!" Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " The women in the Heaven will be free of the menstrual periods. They will not have the instincts of jealousy and ill temper!" The narrator asked, " Will there be music and song in the Heaven?" The Imam (a.s.) said, " In the Heaven there is a tree. With the wind, under Allah's Orders, the tree would sway and produce such a wonderful tune that was never there in the world. This music will be only for the ears of the *momin* who shunned music in his worldly life out of fear of Allah. Allah has created the Heaven. No human eye has seen it. Every morning it is opened and the fragrance reaches the inmates of the Heaven. Allah says, " No creature knows what hidden bounties are for him that would provide light and coolness to his eyes. This is in return for the good deeds he has done in the world."

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that *Tooba* is a tree in the Heaven the roots of which are in the Prophet's house and a branch in every *momin's* residence.. Whatever a *momin* wishes to have, the branch of the tree would provide him. The girth of *Tooba* is so wide that if a rider goes around, at great speed for one hundred years, he wouldn't reach from one end to the other. The tree is so tall that if a crow flies from one branch and keeps flying all its life, it would drop dead but wouldn't reach the top of the tree." Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) also said, " O people! Endeavor to get the shadow of the tree of *Tooba!"*
- In another tradition it is mentioned that there is a tree in the Heaven on which *Hillay* (the Heavenly Garments) are produced. Under this tree appear white steeds with harness and stirrups. These horses will have wings. The will be free of the need of passing the feces. The *momins* would ride these horses and travel flying to wherever they wish to go. *Momins* of lower category will see this and say, " O Allah! For what you have rewarded them with this bounty?" Allah will reply," They shunned their nights' rest to offer supplication to Me! They used to fast during the days, they did *Jehad* with my enemies and used to spend their wealth in My way!" The leaf of the tree of *Tooba* will be so wide that under it's shade the entire following of one Prophet (a.s.) could assemble.
- It is narrated that the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) used to smell Hazrat Fatima Zehra (a.s.) very often

  Hazrat Ayesha didn't like this practice of the Prophet (a.s.). Once she asked the Prophet (a.s.) why he did this. The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " O Ayesha! On the *Night of Meraj* I had been to the *Firmament.* Jibrael took me near the *Tree of Tooba.* He gave me the fruit from the tree. I ate it. That introduced the sperm in my backbone. When I returned to the earth, I mated with Khadija (a.s.) and she bore Fatima (a.s.). I get the fragrance of the *Tree of Tooba* from Fatima (a.s.)." The Prophet (a.s.) added, " Fatima (a.s.) has the nature of the houris and the features of a human being. Whenever I think of the Heaven, I smell Fatima (a.s.). She effuses the fragrance of the Heaven!"
  - Abdullah bin Abbas narrates that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " In the Heaven a ring of rubies is suspended on a tablet of gold. When this ring strikes the tablet it produces sound like saying "*Ya Ali (a.s.)".*
  - It is narrated by Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said," The night I went for *Meraj* and entered the Heaven, I noticed some angels busy at construction work. They were alternatively putting on a golden and a silver brick. In between they took some respite. I asked them as to why they were stopping work periodically. They said that they were stopping the work for the arrival of the binding material. The Prophet (a.s.) asked, " What is that binding material?" They replied, " It is the recitation of the *momin* on the rosary of the words: *Subhan Allah wal hamdu Lillah wa la ilaha ilAllahu wa Allahu Akbar."* When a *momin* recites these words we commence our work. When he stops his recitation we stop our work."
  - Jabir bin Abdallah narrates that the Prophet (a.s.) has said, " On the door of the Heaven it is inscribed,' *la ilaha Il Allahu Mohammedun rasoolullahi Aliun akhoo rasoolillah- there is no god but Allah, Mohammed is his Prophet (a.s.)t and Ali(a.s.) is the Prophet's brother."* This inscription was there on the firmament a thousand years before the earth was created. In the Heaven Allah has created a

column of rubies on which there are seventy thousand palaces. Every palace has a thousand doors. These palaces are for those persons who make friend with people to please Allah and travel to meet them.

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that one day Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked the Prophet (a.s.) to narrate the commentary of the verse:*" Lakin al lazeena attaqau rabbahum lahum ghurafun min fauqeha ghurafun mubanniyatun tajari min tahtehal anhaaru wa ad allahu la yuqlefulallahul meaad (Sura Zumr, Verse 20)— But those who fear Allah, storeys over storeys will be constructed for them under which canals would be flowing. This is Allah's promise ; and Allah never breaks His promises."* Hazrat Ali (a.s.) asked, " How will the storeys be?" The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " Allah has made these storeys with precious stones. Their ceilings are of gold with engravings of silver. The door of every storey will have a thousand pearls affixed on it. The floors will have carpets of silk and brocade. They will be perfumed with musk, ambergris and camphor. When a *momin* enters them a crown will be placed on his head. The crown will be embossed with precious stones. He will be given a robe which will be embroidered with red rubies and pearls.. He will be made to sit on a throne. At that moment the angel of the *Garden of the Heaven* will seek permission to come to greet him. The attendants of the *momin* will tell to the angel that permission cannot be granted that the *Momin* was resting with the *Houri.* When the *Houri* emerged out, then the angel would enter to greet the *Momin.* The angel will notice thousands of maids in attendance around the throne. The *Momin* would try to rise as a mark of respect to the angel. The angel would say, " Don't rise! This is the time for your relaxation!" Then they will both embrace This embrace will be as long as a period of five hundred years in this world. But they will not be slightly tired or uneasy with this. Then the *Momin* would look at the Houri who will have a tablet around he neck with the engraving, ' O friend of Allah! You are my beloved and I am yours! I was very eager about you and you were very eager for me as well!" Then other angels would follow to greet him. In this manner a thousand angels would be sent by Allah to greet the *Momin.* When the angels reach the door of the Heaven, they will tell to the Keeper to seek permission from the *Momin* for their visit. The keeper would be told that the *Momin* was meeting the Houri and the visitor shall have to wait for getting an audition. One thousand angels would thus wait their turn to meet and greet the *Momin.* The Keeper would go to the private servants of the *Momin,* who in turn will tell to the *Momin* when permission will finally be granted to the thousand angels to enter through the doors. The angels would then greet and congratulate the *Momin.* About this event Allah has said in the Holy Book, "*Wal malaikathu yadkhuloona alaihimu min kulle baabin salamun alaikum bema sabartum fanema uqbi ad daar- And the angels shall approach them from every door (and say) 'peace be on you on account of the forbearance that you practiced and the abode of the Hereafter is fine and excellent' – Ar Raad 24-23.*
- Similarly in *Ad Dahr* Verse 20, Allah says, " *Wa iza rayata nayeeman was mulkan kabira- And whichever way you direct your vision, you shall find bounties and riches."* The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said that '*Nayeem'* means the realm that Allah will grant to His friend on the Day of Judgement. There the angels will greet and congratulate but they will not enter without the express permission of

the *Momin.* Then the Prophet (a.s.) added that under the rooms of the *Momins* canals would be flowing and on their banks will be trees laden with fruits. Whichever fruit they desire to eat, the branch of that fruit tree would come near the *Momin's mouth.* Every fruit would converse with the *Momin* with Allah's orders and would say,' O pious person! Please do eat me!" Every Momin would own several gardens where canals of milk, sweet water and beverages would be flowing. Whatever he desired to eat would be instantly available to him. The *Momins* would saunter around the Heaven together. They will meet and socialise with one another. Everytime there will be a pleasant breeze blowing in the Heaven as is seen at the times of dawn in the world. Every *Momin will have seventy Houris and four human wives.*

- Then the Imam (a.s.) said that the *Momin* would sit in the Heaven with a bolster behind his back. Suddenly he would notice a bright radiance. He will ask his servants what the light was. They will say that it was a glimpse of the *Houri* that it had peeped from the corner of the door to get a glimpse of yours. Seeing you, the *Houri* smiled and the radiance was the reflection of its shining teeth. .The *Momin* would then give permission for the *Houri* to enter his chambers..
- Hearing this, the servants would go running and convey the message to the *Houri.* The *Houri* would then dress in raiment of jewels, wear perfumes of musk and ambergris and come to the presence of the *Momin.* The *Houri* would be so delicate that its slender limbs would be visible through its raiment of jewels. The *Momin's* servants would spray sacrificial shower of jewels in honor of the *Houiri.* Then the *Houri* would go forward and embrace the *Momin.*
- Narrating this tradition, the Imam (a.s.) said, " The heavens about which Allah has mentioned are *Jannat e Adan, Jannat al Firdous, Jannat an Nayeem* and *Jannat al Maawa.* In between these heavens, there will be several other heavens. The *Momin* would rest in whichever heaven he wished to have a respite in. If he desired for anything, he would say,' *Subhanaka allahumma '* Hearing this the slaves would produce before him what he desired for.. Therefore Allah has said, " *Dawaahum feeha subhanaka allahumma wa tahiyatahum feeha salamun wa aakhiru daawahum anil hamdu lillahi rabil aalameen- In the Heaven they would say,' O Allah! You are pure and flawless' and their congregational prayer would be for their collective peace. This prayer would end in praises for Allah who is the Sustainer of the Worlds." Sura Younus, Verse 10.*
- Someone asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) the commentary of the verse," *Feehinna khairatun hisaan."* The Imam (a.s.) replied that here are meant the pious *Shia women* who will go to the Heaven and get married to the *Momins.* Then the person asked, " What is meant by,' *Hoorun maqsooraatun filqiyam/' He replied, "* There will be delicate *houris* of fair complexion in the Heaven who will sit in tents made of emerald and coral. Every tent will have four doors. Every door will have seventy virgin women stationed as guards. These *houris* have been created to give company to the *Momins.*
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said that the trunk of every tree in the Heaven is made of gold. The people of the Heaven will be endowed with increased good looks, strength and brightness every day. The lowest ranking inmate of the

Heaven will be provided with seventy servants. Ninetytwo stages of the elevated stages of the Heaven would be earmarked for him.

- The women of the Heaven will remain virgin even after copulation because they will be the creation of pure and clean soil. They will have no marks and deformities and nothing would have entered their private parts. They will be free of menstrual discharges. Their hymen would be intact even after copulation.
- In another tradition the Prophet (a.s.) has said, " The four walls of the Heaven have been erected with bricks made of gold and silver. In place of concrete, a mixture of musk, ambergris and rose water would be used. Its ramparts would be made of emeralds red and green. . It has many doors. *Baab ar Rehmat* is made of red emeralds. *Baab as Sabr* is a small door made of emeralds and will have no door-chain. *Baab as Shukr* is made of white emeralds and its two shutters have a distance equivalent to the distance traversed in five hundred years. A sound emanates from this door saying,' O Allah! Guide towards me those who are deserving!' *Baab al Bala* is made of yellow emerald. The people who enter through this door will be those who suffered from sicknesses in the world and did not squander their reward by complaining about their condition. There is another big door to the Heaven through which such persons will enter who have abandoned the world to save themselves from evil deeds.. The Prophet (a.s.) was asked, " What will the inmates of the Heaven do when they reach there?" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " They will board the boats and go sight seeing in the waters of the canals. The boats will be made of emeralds. The oars will be made of pearls and the angels would be the sailors. The name of the canal is *Jannat al Maawa.* Then the Imam (a.s.) said," Inside the heaven there will be another heaven, the name of which is *Eden.* Its walls are made of red rubies and the flooring of pearls. Then there will be another heaven by name of *Jannat al Firdous.* Its walls and doors are made up of light.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " In the Heaven, the inmates will not need to attend the nature's call. It will, in fact, be converted into a fragrant liquid.
- The Prophet (a.s.) said, " O Abu Dharr! Be quiet while with a funeral procession and when in battle and recite the Holy Book!"
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) said, " There are five times of prayer, when it is accepted: 1. While reciting the Quran. 2. When the *Adhan* is said. 3. While it is raining (when the first rain drops fall on the land).. 4. At the time of battle when the skirmish between the believers and the infidels is in progress. 5.When the oppressed pray."
- When the Quran is recited, listen quietly and with intent. At that time quiet is mandatory and talking taboo. Some jurists are of opinion that when the Imam (a.s.) leads the prayer and recites the verses, the congregation should be quietly standing behind him. Also the Prophet (a.s.) has exhorted (*Sunnat e muwakkida)* that people should quietly listen to the recitation of the Quran.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that when a person hears quietly one word of the Quran recited, Allah will apportion one reward for him and deletes one sin from his account of deeds (*Nama e Aamaal).* The person will be advanced one stage ahead in the Heaven for this act.

- Keeping quiet while proceeding with a funeral procession means that one should go with patience and equanimity and not crying and wailing.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that Allah doesn't like two sounds: the sound of people crying in times of difficulty and singing in times of happiness.

LAUGHTER & JEST

A *momin* will have gracefulness on his face even if he is sad at his heart. A person remaining morose all the time is not good. A *momin* must keep a broad forehead, pleasant mien, and good nature. He should also have a good sense of humor. But all this should be in moderation.

- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that excessive jesting puts one to shame and excessive laughter harms ones faith. If a person lies, the radiance of his face diminishes.
- The Prophet Dawood (a.s.) told to Hazrat Sulaiman (a.s.) three things, one of which was, "My Son! Don't laugh much that on the Day of Reckoning one would rise a beggar because of this!"
- It has appeared in the traditions that three things cause Allah's ire: 1. Sleeping during the day without remaining awake in the nights. 2. Laughing without any cause for doing so. 3. Eating to ones satiation.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that one who laughs much in worldly activities, will cry much on the Day of Judgement. There are many who cry in fear of Allah's Retribution. They are the ones who will be happy on the Day of Judgement.
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " I am surprised how one laughs who is sure of the retribution of the Hellfire? With excessive laughter the heart dies.
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) always kept his laughter to the extent of a smile. None heard him laugh loudly. Once he passed a group of persons laughing loudly, when he said," O people! Excessive expectations and scarcity of good deeds have misled you.Think of your graves. Take lesson from the thought of inevitable death and the retribution of the Day of Reckoning!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said that laughter causes loss of faith like the water dissolving the salt. Laughing for no reason is a sign of ignorance. He also said," Don't joke or quarrel with your friend. Jest is like abuse and the cause of hate and enmity." He also said, " Don't expose your teeth in laughter when your bad deeds are there to put you to shame. You cannot prevent yourself from the onslaught of death!"
- O Abu Dharr! Two things are bad: 1. Laughing without reason. 2. Delay in offering the mandatory prayers because of laziness.
- O Abu Dharr! Man knows that his inner instinct (*Nafs e Ammara)* makes him commit mistakes day and night that put him to hardship and repentance. Then how one can laugh knowing all this? It doesn't mean that he should always be morose and forlorn. A *momin* must be pleasant and smiling. But he should not

laugh excessively. One should know that jesting much one loses his respect and excessive laughter reduces ones faith."

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that people indulging in the futile worldly activities always keep laughing. They will cry on the Day of Reckoning. Those who cry out of the fear of the Retribution , will not cry in the Hereafter..
- Jest and good humor in moderation is a part and parcel of good behavior and a sign by which a *momin* is recognized. Jest should be with the sole purpose of pleasing the *momins.*

THE NINTH FRUIT

LAZINESS IN OFFERING PRAYERS

Laziness in offering mandatory prayers is a trait of the hypocrites. *Momin* should not be tardy about offering prayers and should fulfil this obligation with humility and fear of Allah.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that when one thinks of performing a good deed, then he should hasten to accomplish it; lest Satan diverts his mind and the deed is not done!. .

DEDICATION OF HEART IN PRAYER

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) has said, “ Abstain from two habits: Losing interest in performing tasks and shirking from doing work.

Losing interest in work would curb ones instinct of patience and being lazy will give him the feeling of not abiding by his legitimate duty.

- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said,” O Abu Dhar! Offering two genuflections of prayer with full dedication is better than praying the whole night with no dedication of the heart.

- “O Abu Dhar! Truth is more valuable and bitter while falsehood is light and sweet.”
- Many a time a moment’s carnal desire becomes the cause of retribution in the Hereafter.
- .Man cannot become wise and jurisprudent till he doesn’t visualize men as camels in comparison with the greatness and omnipotence of Allah... When he pays attention to himself, then he would realize that he is the most inferior.
- O Abu Dharr! You will not realize the value of faith till you recognize that all men are wise in the matters of faith.
- Every person is flattered with sycophancy although he knows well that whatever the flatterer says is sheer lies.
- It must be borne in the mind that thoughtlessness is of two types. One category is good and the other is bad. The one thoughtlessness is that a person thinks that all profit and loss accrued is according to the wish of Allah. He doesn’t give credence to what others think about his changed status. He generally doesn’t bother about what others think when he decides to do something to please Allah. This status is reached when the person has understood the Greatness of Allah. The bad type of thoughtlessness is due to pride and prejudice. Such persons consider others inferior to them and become oblivious of their own failings. At the time of prayer such persons don’t bother about others. They consider others as sheer camels tantamount to being animals. Then he said,” While introspecting, consider oneself humble.. A person who tries to please someone in power contrary to the dictates of Allah, he will render himself an apostate.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says,” The person is a deserter of the Faith who, in order to please men, disobeys the Commandments of the Creator. Never displease Allah to please mortals. Don’t acquire nearness to people by deeds that take you away from Allah. There is no way of achieving Rewards from Allah other than implicitly obeying Him”
- Obedience to Allah is the route to success and deliverance. Allah guards the obedient from all evil. The disobedient cannot protect himself from Allah’s Retribution. When the time comes, such persons shall have no place to run to.
- Then the Imam (a.s.) said, “ Protect yourself from the reproach of those who have reason to reproach. Allah will save you from the deceit of the enemies.”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says,” A person who rates a *momin* inferior, Allah always deems him inferior.”
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, “ A *momin* should always contemplate in his own conscience and remember that one day he will have to render account of his deeds. It is better he straightens his account today only, lest he repents tomorrow!
- It is narrated from Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) through authentic source that “a person who doesn’t introspect his own actions every day is not from amongst us.”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said,” If a person notices good in himself, he should pray to Allah that his good deeds enhance.. If he finds that he has committed some bad deeds, he should seek the forgiveness of Allah.”

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says, “ Obtain sustenance from your own conscience. Be grateful to receive sustenance in good health before you fall ill and in youth instead of doing it when you are old and weak.”
- Don’t rate a thing low that can bring you reward on the Day of Reckoning. Don’t also belittle the thing that might bring you Retribution on that Day. Remember, the things about which Allah has warned, have to be always borne in mind.”
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.), as a part of his final testament, told to Imam Hassan (a.s.),” O son! There are three moments for a *momin.* In one moment he supplicates to his Creator. In the second he draws a balance of his deeds and in the third he draws pleasure for his good deeds and offers thanks to Allah.”
- He also said, “ One who searches the aberrations of his conscience and doesn’t remove them, and gets overwhelmed with desires, would rather die.”
- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) says, “ O son of Adam (a.s.)! As long as your own conscience is your preacher (and reformer) your actions will remain good.. When you attain this status, make fear of Allah your habit. Wear the raiment of sorrow and penitence.. O son of Adam (a.s.)! You are destined to die! You will be raised again to render account before Allah! Prepare now for that day!”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that before you are asked to give the account (of your deeds), audit the account yourself!
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, “ O Abu Dharr! Modesty in front of Allah is compulsory. If you are particular of entry to the Heaven, then save your eyes, ears, tongue and thoughts from acts of sin. Being modest with Allah means abstaining from evil and not committing sins. . ..
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said,” Modesty and faith are always together. Modesty is the part and parcel of faith and so is the faith of modesty. If there is no modesty, there is no faith!”
- A tradition of the Prophet (a.s.): If four traits are present in a person, the Hellfire is taboo on him even if he sinned no end. These traits are:

1. Truthfulness.
2. Humility
3. Good manners
4. Thankfulness.

HUMILITY & FAITH

An Infallible has said,” O Abu Dharr! Humility in a person prompts one not to forget that he would putrify in the grave. He keeps the desires of his stomach and the head, his lust and carnal urge in control. One who is desirous of the benefits of the Hereafter should shun the world. If you can achieve this, you will qualify to attain the friendship and *wilayat* of Allah."

Humility (*hayah)* connotes curbing of instincts that put the conscience to shame. There are two categories of humility::

One category is the height of virtuosity that brings felicity. The other category is the height of depravity.

The quality of virtuosity is acquired when one is able to distinguish good from evil, he starts feeling ashamed of ever quitting good deeds and missing mandatory prayers. He submits humbly to Allah and abstains from sins that have been rated taboo by the *Shariah.* The acts of the adherents (*Ummat)* are all presented every day to the Prophet (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.). Two angels are always alert to record the actions of the person. If Allah removes the curtain, all the inhabitants of the firmament would witness the acts of the human beings and put them to shame on the Day of Reckoning in front of 124,000 Prophets (a.s.) and the entire creation.

The other category of humility is inferior. Because of ignorance a person considers an act taboo and refrains from it. This happens because of the lack of correct knowledge. For example, sometimes they are confronted with a problem and are shy to seek an explanation from the knowledgeable. Such humility can be the cause of losing the felicity or bliss in the Hereafter. Allah says:

"Wallaho la yestaha minalhaq"
Allah is not shy of the truth

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that humility is of two types--- there is humility of wisdom and also there is humility of foolishness. The cause of the humility of wisdom is sagacity and knowledge. The humility of foolishness is because of ignorance and lack of knowledge.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " One whose forehead is narrow, will have scanty knowledge. .O people! Don't be ashamed of acquiring knowledge!"

- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," Shunning humility is the cause of all ills and sins. Humility is of two kinds. One is attended with weakness of intellect and lack of knowledge. The other type connotes the strength of Islam and the Faith.
- Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) says," One who wishes the privacy of his home must put up a curtain. Allah has endowed humility to people as He has endowed them with the means of livelihood."

THE TENTH FRUIT

LEGITIMATE LIVELIHOOD

One should abstain from consuming things that are deemed illegitimate and even those things that have been rated *makrooh* (unbecoming) by the *Shariah.* One should not eat the *makrooh* foods and also avoid sharing the table of those who pursue

haram professions. In today's world acquiring *halal* livelihood is a difficult task. But Allah has made it binding on the people to seek legitimate livelihood.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," One who desires that his prayers are answered, he must strive for legitimate and fair livelihood!"

GUARDING ONES PRIVATE PARTS

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.)said," The best worship of Allah is to protect ones private parts from *haram* (illegitimate) acts. One person asked, " O Imam (a.s.)! My actions are not commendable nor do I fast regularly. But I strive hard to have a *halal* (legitimate) livelihood. The Imam (a.s.) said," there is no prayer greater than the chastity of the stomach and the private parts.."
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," The biggest cause of my followers going to the Hell are two empty things, the empty stomach and their private parts."
- The Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) is reported to have said to Najm, " O Najm! All Shias will be with us in the Heaven but imagine the predicament of those whose failings would be exposed there. " Najm asked the Imam (a.s.), " O Hazrat! Will this be the condition of your Shias?" He said," Yes! If he has not guarded his belly and the private parts."
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," I am much worried about the following things in my followers: illegitimate earning, desire to fulfil secret carnal desires, cheating, usury and taking loans unnecessarily."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " If a person makes dishonest earnings and goes to perform Haj with savings from such amount, in response to his call of Labbaek(the beck and call) the reply will be *la labbaek* (not at beck and call) and when he says *sadeeka* the reply will be *la saadeek,* which means that none of his efforts are acceptable to Allah.

- The Imam (a.s.) said, " One group received the world in a legitimate manner but they didn't accept it and departed from the world in that state. Then another group was offered the legitimate mixed with the doubtful. They refused to accept the doubtful and contented themselves only with the legitimate. Then a third group was presented only with the illegitimate wealth that they refused to accept and went away. *Momin* draws only the bare necessities from the world. It is like a starving person consuming the meat of a dead animal to save his life.
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) said," The illegitimate wealth grows, even then it will not bring *baraka* (good fortune). If this money is spent on charity, it will not bring any rewards.. When one leaves behind such illgotten wealth, it will be the harbinger of Hell for him.
- It is authoritatively narrated from Sama that he told to Imam Jafar eSadiq (a.s.), " O Hazrat! One of the retainers of Bani Omayyah has amassed huge wealth and

gives large amounts in charity. He treats his kith and kin generously, goes for Haj pilgrimage and says that he would definitely get reward for these good deeds. This he says because Allah has said

"Innal hasanaath yuzhebna al sayeeaat
no doubt good deeds obliterate evil deeds

The Imam (a.s.) replied, " The man is spending other people's wealth which is a Sinful act. How can one sin obliterate another sin? Allah says in this regard:

"*wa qaddimna ila ma amelu min amalin fajaalnaahu habaa an manthura"*
"and We shall give attention to their good deeds that they have performed in the world, and We shall scatter these good deeds into particles."

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said," By Allah! Their deeds will be very radiant and shining, but since they didn't abstain from ill-gotten wealth, Allah will say that their deeds would be scattered away as particles.

ABSTAINING FROM ILLTGOTTEN SUSTENANCE

It is obligatory to abstain from taboo (*haram)* food. *Halal* and pure food is the victual of the good, truthful and pious persons. Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) was exercising special care about his food only on account of this.. The food one takes has a strong bearing on the actions and the nearness the person has with Allah. The strength of the human body is related to the animal instinct and the animal instinct is related to the blood that is a product of the food ingested. Therefore, if the food is pure and legitimate, the blood produced will result in good deeds that will be deemed as invocation to the Creator. To the contrary, if the food taken by a person is derived from illgotten earnings, his prayers will not be accepted by Allah..

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said that any person from amongst my followers who abstained from four things will earn a place in the Heaven.: 1. Avarice for the world. 2. Carnal desires. 3. Filling one's belly with illegitimate food. 4. Lasciviousness of the private parts.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that a person who wishes that his prayers get answered, he should strive to earn legitimately and buy his food from such earning."

THE ELEVENTH FRUIT

ABOUT ADULTERY

One should abstain and keep away from adultery. It is one of the major sins that a person can commit. Adultery is of different types.

There is adultery through the private parts, adultery through the eyes by looking at the females lustfully, adultery by peeping at adult *na-mahram females (* the females who, according to the *shariah,* are outside the immediate family circle), the adultery through the ears by hearing lustful talk or amorous songs and taking pleasure hearing the talk of *na-mahram* women.

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) and Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) have said that there are few men who are safe from adultery. The reason for this is that there are several categories of adultery: Adultery of the eye (looking with lust at women is *haram*), adultery with touch (touching women with lust), adultery with mouth (kissing *na-mahrum females),* and the most accursed person on the Day of Reckoning will be that who introduced his seed in the private part of a *na-mahram.*
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) has said that one must abstain from adultery because it affects the livelihood and nullifies the Hereafter for the person.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said the adulterer will have six traits, three worldly and the other three are for the Hereafter.. The worldly traits will be: 1.loss of the radiance of the face. 2. The person becomes impecunious. 3.He moves closer to destruction. The traits of the adulterer in the Hereafter will be: !. He faces the ire of Allah. 2. He finds it extremely difficult to render account on the Day of Judgement. 3. He will be consigned to the Hell in perpetuity.. .
- After me, adultery will be rampant. Because of this there will be sudden deaths of people.
- The companions of Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) told him, “ O perfect guide! Give us guidance.” He replied, “ Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) has exhorted you not to make false promises. I warn you not to make even true promises. Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) has asked you to never commit adultery. I exhort you not even to get the thought of adultery in your minds.”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) told to Mufazzil, “ O Mufazzil! One who commits adultery with another person, one day he too would face the same predicament. Listen with care! There was an infamous adulteress in the tribe of Bani Israel. One man used to visit her frequently. One day Allah made the woman tell him that his spouse was commiting adultery with another male at his house. The man was doing the same with his wife that he did with her. In anger, the man rushed home. He saw a man sleeping with his spouse. He went to the presence of Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) and complained. Hazrat Jibrael came and told Hazrat Moosa (a.s.), “ Please tell this person that as you sow, so shall you reap! You must take care of the chastity of others if you are concerned of your own!”

THE RETRIBUTION FOR ADULTERY, PAEDERASTY & SAHAQ

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The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has narrated that Jibraeel has told him that the fragrance of the Heaven can be smelled from a distance equivalent to travelling for a thousand years. But one who has been disinherited by his parents, one who aborted a pregnancy and who is an adulterer will not be able to smell this fragrance..

It has come in the traditions that one who copulates with a woman through her anal cavity or commits pederasty will be raised up on the Day of Reckoning in a condition worst than the carcass of a dead animal. The people then will be troubled much with the foul smell. He will be consigned to the Hell and no cognizance will be taken of his past deeds. He will be sealed in a casket on which steel nails will be fixed. He will be in such extreme retribution that if a single vein of his is taken near a 100,000 persons, they will all die with the foul stink.

It is said that a person who sets an evil eye on his neighbor's house and avers the hair and bodies of women with lust, will be consigned to the Hell along with the hypocrites. A person who reveals the private deals of Muslims will not depart from the world till his own evil deeds are exposed.

- It is said that one who gets an opportunity to rape a slave-girl and refrains from doing it with fear of Allah, will be spared from the Hellfire and will be in peace on the Day of Reckoning. He will be rewarded with a place in the Heaven.
- It is said that if one has touched a woman with an evil intent, his hands will be tied to his neck on the day of reckoning.
- It is said that if one has talked in jest with a *na-mahram woman,* he will be made a prisoner in the Grounds of Reckoning for a thousand years.
- It is said that if one has stared at a *na-mahram female* with evil intent, his eyes will be pierced with fiery nails. This process will continue till all the creation has gone through the Reckoning. Then the person will be consigned to the Hell.
- A person who commits adultery with a married woman, such man and woman would ooze a stinking fluid from their private parts that the road in the Hell will smell foul for a distance that can be traveled in five hundred years.
- When a married woman sets an evil eye one a *na-mahram male,* Allah's Retribution will fall on her and all her good deeds would go null and void.
- A woman who beds with a strange man, she will burn in the Hellfire.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that one should treat the parents well that the person's children do likewise with him. .Don't commit adultery with *na-mahram* lest someone commits the same with your women.
- There are three signs of *walad-az-zina* (born of adultery): 1. The person has a tendency to harm people. 2. The person has the desire for adultery. 3. The person carries illwill towards the *Ahl al Bayt.*
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," On the *Night of meraj* I noticed some women hanging from their breasts. I learnt from Jibrael that these were the women who gave birth to children through adultery and made them inherit their husbands' possessions." The Prophet (a.s.) also said," If someone has committed adultery with a Christian, Zoroastrian, Jew or a Muslim, will not get even the smell of the Heaven. When a

person has control over a *namahram female,* and , out of fear of Allah, refrains from adultery with her, all his sins will be pardoned and will find a place for himself in the Heaven. When a woman agrees with a man for adulterous relations, she will be a party to the sin. In cases of forceful adultery, only the man is answerable.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " Sodomy is worst than adultery. It is because of this evil practice that the tribe of Loth has been destroyed by Allah..
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said," One who commits sodomy will rise unclean on the Day of Judgement. The waters of the earth cannot make him clean. Allah's curse will be on such persons. They will suffer in the Hell.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says," When a man approaches the back of another for sodomy, then the Firmament shakes and the sodomous person will be incarcerated on the Bridge of the Hell till a time that he gives the account of his deeds. Then he will be consigned to the Hell forever. He will ultimately reach the lowest echelons of the Hell for maximum suffering."
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said," Sodomy is copulation through the anal cavity. This activity is infidelity in the eyes of Allah."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," The women who have committed *Sahaq* will be brought forth on the Day of Reckoning in such a state that they will be draped in a fiery dress. On their heads there will be sheets of fire and a pillar of fire will be inserted inside them. They will ultimately be consigned to the Hell"

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THE TWELFTH FRUIT

PROTECTING ONE'S EYE

Amongst the parts of the human body, the part most exposed to sin and transgression is the eye. It is the eye that provokes the base instincts in a person to commit minor and major sins. Setting eye on a *na-mahram* is no doubt illegtimate, but even looking at things that have been termed illegitimate by the *Shariah. The people who donot guard their eyes, their prayers are not answered, however pious they might be.* We shall deal with the matter of the acceptance of the prayers in three steps.

- Someone asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " O Hazrat! What is love?" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Those whose hearts are devoid of the thought of Allah, He puts the love of others in them."
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," Save yourself from the company of the sons of the rich. They have more defects than the defects of the girls who remain in the veil.."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " Sight is the most poisnous arrow of the Satan. A Person who refrains from setting evil eye around him out of fear of Allah, Allah will endow him with faith, sustenance and legitimate pleasures."

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER
THE STARS

THE FIRST STAR
THE SUPERIORITY OF PRAYER

THE SUPERIORITY OF SUPPLICATION

A superior way of prayer and an easy method to achieve nearness to Allah is through supplication. The method of supplication, as prescribed by the Infallible Imams (a.s.), is that after offering the mandatory prayers, one must recite supplications depending on the time that can be taken out from the other duties.

The Creator of the Universe Himself says, " Call Me (*through supplication)* and I shall respond! Those who don't believe in supplication are conceited people. Their place will be the Hell in the Hereafter.If man wants to call Allah and wishes the prayers to be answered, then he has to implicitly follow the Commandments of Allah."

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said to Maisar, " O Maisar! Offer prayer to Allah and don't say that what is destined will happen. You should remember that Allah has absolute control over the destinies and supplication can change the fate of persons."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said, " The best prayer is supplication and the worst enemy of Allah is a person who, in his pride, refuses to do supplication.and invocation. To the contrary one who supplicates to Allah with due humility will get his prayers answered. It is like the door opening for a person who keeps knocking at it!"
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says, " Suppliocation is the dearest act of the creature in the consideration of Allah."

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said," Supplication is the sword of the *momin* to subdue his adversaries. It is a pillar of the Faith that makes the structure of the Faith stronger. It illumines the Firmament and the earth."
- Imam Reza (a.s.) has said," Supplication is sharper than the spear and the arrow. It wards away calamities. Supplicate, and supplicate the more! Supplication is the key to Allah's Blessings. It is the cure for all pains and aches.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that for warding out the wave of calamities one should have access to supplication even before the calamitous situation arises. He also said that calamities visit the *momins* fast like the water falling down the hill. .In such situation the only alternative for the person will be prayer and supplication.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that three things are there for a person's protection: 1. Prayer whien a calamity comes. 2. Repentence after commiting a sin. 3. Thanking Allah for the Bounties.

THE SECOND STAR

THE ETIQUETTE OF SUPPLICATION

Supplication is petitioning Allah for fufillment of ones legitimate desires. It is therefore necessary that the supplicant should be conversant with the meaning of the prayer and the etiquette of reciting the prayer. He must recite the supplication with dedication of heart and his attitude should be equally submissive if not more than what he adopts for asking a favor from a fellow human being.

- FIRST CONDITION: When a person approaches another person for a favor, he keeps in mind certain things. Firstly, whatever he says, he says with full understanding. Whatever he plans in his mind to say, he communicates to the person verbatim. While supplicating to Allah, a person should have his specific purpose in his mind.

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " Allah doesn't answer the prayer of a person whose prayer doesn't come from his heart." Therefore, one should pray from the depths of his heart and should have a conviction that Allah will fulfil his wish..

- SECOND CONDITION: When a person seeks help from another in time of difficulty, it is necessary that the person has to be known to him.It is an added advantage if the two have been acquainted with each other in the past. Similarly when one has to approach Allah for the grant of a wish, it is necessary that the person should have been offering thanks to the Almighty for His Bounties!
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that when a person wants Allah to help him in times of difficulty, he must make it a habit to supplicate to Allah before any such difficulty arises. He should not present himself to Allah as a total stranger when he needs help.

- One person asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that Allah exhorts people to ask for things and he would grant them. But he said that he keeps praying but the prayers remain unanswered. The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Have you fulfilled the covenants you made with Allah? Have you observed the do's and don'ts prescribed for you. If not, then how can you expect Him to grant your wishes?
- THIRD CONDITION: When we expect favors from a person, we serve him meticulously to keep him in good cheer. Similarly those who are more particular in offering prayers to Allah, generally get their wishes granted.
- Therefore the prayers of those who are closer to Allah get answered. For this one has to be pious, honest and truthful.
- FOURTH CONDITION: Another condition for the effectiveness of supplication is the state of understanding of the Almighty. Firmer the Faith of the supplicant, better the chance of his prayers getting answered.
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) was asked by someone,"O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! We pray, but our prayers are not answered." The Imam replied, " Do you know Him whom you approach for granting your wishes!"
- FIFTH CONDITION: Beseeching and lamentation during supplication is very effective for acceptance of the prayers. The more humility a supplicant manifests, the more there will be the chance of Allah granting his wish. It is common knowledge that even in mndane affairs, the persons in power respond to those who appeal to them for help with humility and beseeching.
- SIXTH CONDITION: The etiquette of supplication demands that the supplicant doesn't reveal the purpose his prayer. The belief is that Allah prefers the individual prayer of a suppliant over that of a group.. However, if the suppliant feels that he is a sinner, he can join a group of persons of piety to make a supplication.. Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) has said in this regard that if forty persons supplicate as a group on Friday, their prayers will definitely be answered. The Imam (a.s.) also said," Whenever my revered father did supplication, he used to call all the members of the family to join in. He would recite the supplication and the rest would say,'*Aameen'! "*
- SEVENTH CONDITION: The timing of a supplication too is very vital for the effectiveness of the prayers. Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that four times are most suitable for prayer: 1. When there is a sandstorm. 2 When it rains. 3. At the time when a battle is going on. 4. When a *momin* is martyred and the first drop of his blood falls to the ground.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that four timings are specific for supplications: 1. While reciting the Holy Quiran. 2. When one hears the call for prayer- *Adhan.* 3. When it rains. 4. When a battle is raging and *momins* get martyred.
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said that the best time for supplication is near dawn (*Sahr).*
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said " Do your supplication before sun-rise. This is the time when the rivers of the Firmament are opened, sustenance is distributed and prayers are answered."

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said," If one wants to supplicate to Allah, three timings are the most suitable: 1.On Fridays before the congregational sermon is delivered. 2. At the time of sunset. 3. Before sunrise.(every day).
- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) narrates that Hazrat Fatima Zehra (a.s.) heard the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) say that there is a particular time on Fridays when prayers are generally answered. When asked, what is that timing, the Prophet (a.s.) said that it is the time when the sun is half way to set.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said on Friday there will be a wind of Allah's Blessing around sunset. The doors of the Heaven are open at that time. This is the best time for supplicating to Allah.
- EIGHTH CONDITION: Crying and beseeching makes the supplication effective. If tears flow from the supplicant's eye while he prays, or even one drop of tear comes out of the eye, the prayer will definitely be answered.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said the creature nearest to Allah is one who, while prostrating in prayer, cries and if he has lost hope of his prayer getting answered he should raise his hands towards the Heaven as if importuning Allah for granting his wish.
- NINETH CONDITION: The supplicant should give alms to poor and needy because these are the servants of Allah.They are like the janitors at a king's palace. To reach the king, one has to please the janitors.
- TENTH CONDITION: One should make others needs the medium of conveying his own prayers for acceptance. If one approaches a munificent person and places the needs of others ahead of his own requirement, the donor will be pleased with the concern of the person for others and fulfils his demand.
- Therefore, the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said that when one prays, he should pray not only for himself but pray for others as well. Such prayers will be answered..
- :Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that a person remembers forty *momins* in his prayers, his own prayer too will be accepted.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that a person's prayer may not be accepted as soon as the prayer for the one who is away, and the person prays for him, from a distance.
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said that the most acceptable prayer is one that is offered for a *momin* who is not present at the place.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that when a person prays in general for the *momins,* Allah will keep in mind the numbers of *momins* past and those yet to come and fulfils his wishes accordingly. If the person's actions qualify him for going to Hell, the spirits of the *momins* would plead with Allah for his pardon that he used to pray for them. Then Allah would pardon him and send him to Heaven
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) has said when a *momin* prays for another who is not present, Allah will reward him a hundred times for this act.
- ELEVENTH CONDITION: For acceptance of the prayers, one should thank Allah for His Bounties before supplicating. This is the same way, when a person of status is approached for help, his past munificence is mentioned.with profuse thanks..

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " If you wish your prayers to be answered, you should first praise Allah, then say *durood (* benediction) for the Prophet and his Holy Progeny (a.s.) that your prayers are answered soon.. It is like when one wants to approac a king, he makes presents to those who are close to him. Therefore it is essential that one offers benediction to the Prophet (a.s.) and his family. This benediction should always be repeated before and after any prayer is made. It is natural that when what is accepted before and after the prayer, the prayer too will be accepted!
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " Say benediction on me and my *Ahl al Bayt* so that the angels will say benediction for you. Benediction removes dissensions amongst people.
- It is said: When you hear the Prophet (a.s.)'s name, offer benediction again and again. Because when a person says the benediction once, all the creatures would praise the person. Ignorant and unfortunate is the person who is not aware of this requirement. Allah, the Prophet (a.s.) and the *Ahl al Bayt* will be annoyed with such persons.
- It is mentioned in a tradition that in the balance of actions, no act has so much weight as the benediction of the Prophet (a.s.) and the *Ahl al Bayt.* On the Day of Judgement, the actions of the men would be put in the balance, but since they will be light, the scale would tilt to the other side. Then the Prophet (a.s.) would put the benedictions uttered by the person on the side of the scale where his actions are there. Thus the balance will tilt in favor of the person!
- There is another tradition that if one wishes to save his face from the Hellfire, then say the benediction (*Salawat*) a hundred times after the morning prayer.
- A person who says the benediction a hundred times after the Friday prayer, Allah will fulfill his sixty wishes--- thirty in this life and thirty in the Hereafter.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that on the eve of Friday the angels descend from the firmament and their number is equivalent to the particles in the atmosphere or the ants on the earth.These angels will have golden pens and tablets in their hands. . They will not record the actions of the persons who were not attended by the benediction to the Prophet till Saturday of the week. It is therefore advised that on the eve and the day of Friday, the benediction is repeatedly uttered. The Imam (a.s.) also said that it was the Prophet (a.s.)'s exhortation (*Sunnat e Muwakkidah)* that one should repeat the benediction a thousand times on fridays and a hundred times on the week days.
- Imam Reza (a.s.) has said," If a person doesn't have the means to pay expiation (*Kaffarah*) for his sins, he should utter benediction to the Prophet and his *Ahl al Bayt (a.s.)* that it will reduce the burden of his sins.
- Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) says, " Allah has deemed Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) His friend because he used to excessively utter benediction to Mohammed (a.s.) and his *Ahl al Bayt.*
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that one who says the benediction like this,

Salawatullahi alaihi was salawatu malaekatehi wa anbiaehi wa rusulehi wa jamie kalqehi ala Mohammadin wa aale Mohammedin wassalamu alaihi wa alaihim wa rehmatullahi wa barkatahu,

. his sins would be obliterated and he would be as clean as he way at his birth.

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) is quoted by an authentic source as having said, " When one gets a sneeze, he should say:
  Alhamdu lillahi rabil aalameena was salallahu Mohammedin wa ahl e baytehi
- In another tradition it is said that when one hears the sound of sneezing by someone else, he should say the benediction mentioned above. He will never, then, get pain of the teeth or the eyes.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," One who does not say benediction on me and my progeny, will never get the fragrance of the Heaven although this smell reaches as far as the distance that can be traveled over a period of five hundred years.
- Then the Prophet (a.s.) said," One who says the benediction on me and my *Ahl al Bayt,* the doors to the Heaven will open for him and the angels say benediction on him a seventy times. If he has sinned, the sins will be obliterated like the leaves in the season of fall. Allah says,' O creature! *Saadaeka*—I have accepted your prayers and I shall give you succor!' Then Allah will order the angels to say benediction for the person a seventy times." Then the Prophet (a.s.) says," If someone sends benediction for me and not for my *Ahl al Bayt,* then seven curtains will obstruct it in the Firmament and Allah says,' *La labbaek wa la saadeeka—neither your prayer is acceptable nor shall succor come to you'"*
- Allah further says,' O My angels! Don't allow his prayers to reach the sky. Till he includes the *Ahl al Bayt* in his benediction for the Prophet (a.s.)'
- In another tradition of the Prophet (a.s.) it is recorded," When I am mentioned before a person, and he doesn't say benediction for me and my *Ahl al Bayt ,* his sins will not be pardoned and he will be denied Allah's Rewards.
- At another place the Prophet (a.s.) has said," The most miserly and evil is the person who has not uttered my benediction when my name is mentioned to him." Then the Prophet (a.s.) added," One who forgets to send benediction for me has forgotten the way to the Heaven."
- Maalik Jehni narrates that he presented a flower to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). The Imam (a.s.) took it, smelled it, touched it to his eyes and said, " When a person smells a flower, touches it with his eyes and says benediction to Mohammed (a.s.) and his *Ahl al Bayt,* before the flower leaves his hands, his deliverance would have been granted!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," A person who says the benediction a hundred times, his wishes will definitely be fulfilled!"
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " Whosoever says the benediction on me a hundred times on Fridays, Allah will fulfil sixty of his wishes, thirty in this life and the other thirty in the Hereafter!" It is a *Sunnat e Muwakkidah* that a *momin* should say the benediction a thousand times on the eve and the day of Friday..
- Imam Reza (a.s.) has said that if a person is unable to pay reparations for his sins, should say repeatedly the benediction for the Prophet (a.s.) and his *Ahl al Bayt* that his sins are pardoned by Allah. A person who says the benediction when he gets a sneeze, will never suffer from any ailment of the eyes or the teeth..

THE THIRD STAR

NON ACCEPTANCE OF PRAYERS

Although the Almighty has promised the creatures that their supplications would be answered, there are certain reasons for non-acceptance of some prayers.

Since He is Omnipotent and Omniscient, His will is dominant over all that happens. If the wishes of the people are in accord with His will, their prayers would most certainly be answered. For example, can a generous person, if asked, put a venomous snake in the hand of another person or give a bottle of poison that the other desires of consuming? The generous person knows the consequences of such actions and his denying acquiescence would be in the best interest of the prospective recepient. Similarly, some people pray to Allah for grant of such wishes that, if fulfilled, they might harmfulfor them. But these people are ignorant of the harmful consequences of what they wish to have. Allah is all-knowing and has the best interest of the creatures in view.. Someone might say, if Allah decides what is in the best interest of an individual, then what is the need of supplicating to Him. They think that we might as well leave everything to the wish of Allah.

The reply to such doubts is that there are three types of wishes of the people that come to the consideration of Allah:

1. There are certain wishes that are granted by Allah without ever asking for.
2. There are certain wishes that are not granted despite repeated supplications.
3. There are certain other wishes for granting of which one has to make supplications.

Since man, in most cases, cannot categorise the wishes, he has to pray and supplicate to Allah for fulfillment of all his desires and wishes. Men should know that supplication itself is a very superior prayer..

The other reason for supplication is that everything is governed by certain norms. For example, offering mandatory prayers is a means of ones salvation. True! But prayer too is subject to certain norms. If someone offers prayer without the mandatory ablution, his prayer would not be accepted although, as mentione earlier, prayer is a means of salvation of the person. Similarly for supplication there are certain norms to be observed. Unless a person supplicates with humility, tears (*Giria), knowledge of Allah, regularity in prayers, abstention from bad deeds, fair means of sustenance, truthfulness in words and actions etc* his wishes may not be granted. Therefore, for Allah to keep His promise to answer the prayers of his creatures, they have to abide by certain conditions.

The third reason is that Allah wants that the prayers are answered with some delay. Perhaps, immediate acceptance of the prayers of people is not in their best interests. Or perhaps Allah wants the creature to supplicate again, and again, in a tone of submission

and capitulation so that his status in piety enhances. Certain other times the prayer is answered but there is delay in its taking effect. Hazrat Moosa (a.s.)'s prayer for the destruction of Pharoh tokk thirty years to fruition.

REASONS FOR DELAYED ACCEPTANCE OF PRAYERS

It is narrated through authentic sources that Ahmed bin Abi Nasr told to Imam Reza (a.s.) , " O Imam! Several years passed that I have been supplicating, but my wish has not been granted till now. I am getting doubts in my mind because of this delay!"

The Imam (a.s.) said, " O Ahmed! Keep your heart free of the Satanic doubts! It is the Satan who makes you doubt Allah's Munificence. My ancestor, Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.), said,' It is necessary for a *momin* to pray the same way during times of hardship as he does when times are good. When the wishes are granted, he should not stop supplication. He should not tire of supplicating. In the eyes of Allah, prayer has a superior status. It is necessary that you remain calm and patient in difficult times. Ask for legitimate things from Allah. Don't delay helping your kith and kin. Abstain from people's differences and fights. Remember! We *Ahi al Bayt keep* cordial relations even with those who mean harm to us. By Allah! We pray for their welfare too! You should know that if a rich person gives some help to a needy person, the recepient becomes hopeful of getting more help from him. When Allah grants bounties to a person, he should remember that in return Allah wants him to meet certain norms.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said that the prayers of a *momin* are answered with some delay because Allah wants to hear His sincere creature again and again! The Imam (a.s.) asked a person if he would believ if he (the Imam) made a promise to him? The man said, " O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! How could it be that I don't believe you!" The Imam (a.s.) said, " You are ready to trust the word of a creature like you, will you not believe in the promises that Allah has made to you?" Then the Imam (a.s.) added," It is necessary that you believe in Allah's promises. He has promised:

"*Wa iza salaka ibadi anni fainni kharibun*
O my friend! My creatures ask you questions about me; tell them I am near them
"ujeebu daawat addaaee iza da aan"
I accept the prayer of one who prays

Then Allah says," Don't lose hope in Allah's Mercies." And said," Allah promises you of great rewards and lots of bounties" It is imperative for you that you trust in Allah more than you can trust anyone else. When you have good thoughts in your heart, don't give way to other doubts. Thus your sins will be pardoned."

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " Many a time Allah accepts people's prayers but the benefits take time in reaching the supplicant. Allah instructs the two angels guardian over the person that the supplication has been accepted but he should not be given the benefits immediately that he continues to be suppliant for some more time. Allah will also mention to the angels that he likes the way the person supplicates."

- In another tradition the Imam (a.s.) has said,” Man is always in a good state and rightly keeps expecting Allah’s bounties unless he loses faith in the Munificence of Allah and stop praying for His mercy. He should not be in a hurry to get his prayers answered!“ The narrator asked, “ O Imam (a.s.)! What do you mean by the supplicant making hurry?" ”The Imam (a.s.) replied, " “When a supplicant complains that lot of time has elapsed ever since he initiated his supplication and the wish remains unfulfilled, then he is trying to hurry in the matter..”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has narrated that one day Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) was surveying the environs of *Mount Bait al Muqdis* for a pasture. He heard the voice of a person calling. He proceeded in the direction of the sound. He found a person in the process of offering his prayers. The height of the person was about twelve yards. When the person was through with the prayer, Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) asked him,” To whom were you offering the prayers?”

-The man replied,” I was offering my prayers to the Creator of the land and the skies.

_Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) asked, “ Where be your dwelling?

_ The man pointed to a hill in reply.

-Hazrat Ibrahim(a.s.) said,” I too wish to visit your abode.”

He replied,” There is a river enroute that you cannot cross.”

-Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) asked, “ Then how do you go across?”

- He said,” I can walk on the water.”
- - Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) said, “ Perhaps Allah might endow to me the capability to walk on the water.”
- -Consequently both of them walked across the girth of the river.
- -Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) asked,” Tell me which is the greatest of all days?
- -The man said,” The Day of Reckoning!”
- Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) said,” Come! Let us both pray to Allah for Deliverance on that fateful day.”
- The pious man said,” Why do you make me a partner in your prayer? I have been supplicating for the last three years and my wish has not been granted so far!”
- Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) asked,” What is your wish?”
- The man said,” On day I found a handsome lad grazing a flock. I asked him who owned the flock. The lad replied that the owner was *Ibrahim Khalil ar Rehman.* I prayed to Allah that if He had a *Khalil (*friend) on the earth, then He must give me the honor of setting eye on that revered personality. .But my prayer has remained unanswered.”
- Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) said,” Your wish has been fulfilled. I am *Ibrahim Khalil Allah!* The reason for the delay in answering your prayers was that Allah appreciated the way you modulated your supplication and He wanted to hear you making the call again and again. .Your repeated supplication enhanced your status in the consideration of Allah.”

The fourth reason for Allah not answering the prayers of a supplicant is that the wish that granting the wish might be against the person’s own interest. Allah has the intention of rewarding him with something more useful. As, for example, someone approaches a generous person for a pecunary help of a certain amount. The generous person, after due

consideration, which might take some time, helps him with an amount ten times more than the man expected! Therefore it is not the rejection of the prayer but, in fact, it is an enhancement in the generosity.

THE ADVANTAGES OF PRAYER

There are several benefits accruing from prayer. All the time spent in preparing for the nearness to Allah and supplication is a part of one's prayer.

Dear reader! You must have observed that Allah attracts the ignorant creatures towards Himself by making innumerable promises. This can be explained by the simile of a king making the hawk sit on his arm with affection to train it to hunt. He gives a variety of food to the bird to befriend it. When the hawk is fully trained, he lets it go hunting and to return and perch on his arm. Another example is of parents training and educating their children and, in the process, informing them the myriad uses of learning and skills. When the child is not attentive, they give him pretty dresses and other goodies to attract him towards learning. When the child gets motivated, he himself tries to excel in the skills that the parents wanted him to acquire. Then, whatever comes in the way, the child continues making progress. Similar is the disposition of man.
Man doesn't understand the pleasures and the successes of the Hereafter. Therefore, the Almighty, with His kindness and indulgence invites men towards Himself thus:

" O my creatures! Come. Whatever you ask for, I shall give you! I have everything that can bring you closer to Me! They can thus accomplish their wants in the world and also in the Hereafter.What degree of Munificence that, notwithstanding the Omnipotence, I have, I am calling you closer to Me.. But the ignorant creatures are worrying futilely that their prsayers have remained unanswered.!"

Therefore Allah says:

Innal insaana lerabbehi lakanoor
Truly man manifests ungratefulness to his Creator

Man wonders why his prayer remained unanswered. He doesn't think that supplication is a part of the prayer required of him. When he made entreaty to Allah, he came closer to Him! He communicated his feelings and wishes to the Creator and the Sustainer! He heard Allah's'*labbaek (thy beck and call)!* O supplicant! If you realise the true happiness of prayer and supplication, and the eyes of your heart fathom the mysteries of the attention Allah gives to your lamentations, you would sacrifice your own self not to talk of your mundane wishes! Imagine, a person gets the opportunity with a man in authority, say, a king! And that monarch looks with some attention at the visitor. In his wonderment the man might forget to make his submission to the worthy!

What a pity that when people supplicate before the Almighty Allah, they forget that they have an opportunity to address Allah who has the control of everything in the Universe..

Allah says,” O My creature! Pray and trust Me for your welfare!” And man in his ignorance behaves stubbornly. If he hadn’t a screen of negligence over his mind, he could understand the truth. Allah says,” O angels! Delay fulfilling his wishes! I like the voice in which he is supplicating. If man realises this, he will submit himself totally to the wish of Allah and shun praying for mundane wishes.

THOSE WHOSE PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED

Authentic sources quote that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said,” There are three types of persons whose prayers are answered:

1. Those who go on the holy pilgrame of Haj, their prayers are answered. It is advisable that people at home are taken good care of...
2. Those who do Jehad in the way of Allah. His family and children must be provided support in his absence.
3. The prayers of the sick are also answered. People should, therefore take care of the sick and should not upset them in any way..

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said that five prayers are such that Allah will certainly accept them:

1. Prayer by the Just Imam.
2. Prayer of the oppressed (*mazloom*).
3. The prayer of a pious son for his parents.
4. The prayer of pious parents for their son.
5. The prayer of a *momin* for his brothe *momin* in his absence.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said,” Allah shall definitely accept six types of prayer:
    1. Prayer of a pious father for his son.
    2. Curse of a father for his disinherited (*Aaq-shuda)* son.
    3. .Curse of an oppressed person against a tyrant..
    4. The prayer of one *momin* for another..
    5. The prayer of an oppressed when he recieves a consideration from a cruel person..
    6. Prayer for the pleasure of the *Ahl al Bayt.*

BEWARE OF THE CURSE OF THE OPPRESSED

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) says,” Beware of the curse of the oppressed.that it goes beyond the skies and Allah looks at him with kindness and says,’ Raise his prayer, I shall accept it!’”

The Prophet (a.s.) also said," Prevent yourself from your father's curse. It is sharper than the spear!"

- It has come in the traditions that four types of prayer are not rejected by Allah::1. A father's prayer.for his son. 2. Prayer of the oppressed against the oppressor. 3. Prayer of the person who is on the minor pilgrimage (*Umrah*). 4. The prayer of a person who is fasting.
- It is said that the prayers of five types of persons are not answered: 1. A husband, despite being capable of divorcing a nagging spouse by giving her the *mehr (alimony*), bears with her and doesn't divorce her, but prays against her.. 2. A person whose slave had escaped from his custody thrice but he doesn't sell him and just curses him. 3. A person who doesn't walk hurriedly away from a wall precariously about to fall and prays,' O Allah! May the wall not fall on my head!' 4. A person who advances a loan to someone without taking any witnesses and then prays, ' O Allah! Get back my money to me!' 5. An able bodied person capable of earning his livelihood, but doesn't exert himself to earn, prays' O Allah! Give me livelihood!'
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, O Abu Dhar! If in a town only disobendient sinners are there with only three pious persons, Allah will not send curse to that place.
- O Abu Dhar! Allah is proud and appreciatve of three persons. The first: One who says the *Adhan (*call for prayer) and *Iqamah* (the call to rise for prayer) while alone in a forest and offers his mandatory prayer. Allah asks the angels with pride to look at his sincere creature who has not forgotten the Creator even in the loneliness of the jungle. The second: One who does the *Namaz e Shab* (the night prayers) and prostrates in the loneliness of the night despite being overwhelmed by sleep. Allah tells to the angels that the spirit of the sincere creature is with Him while he is in prostration. The third: A person on the battlefield steadfast fighting the enemies while his own comrades have fled with fear in their hearts!: .
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that offering mandatory prayers in the view of the people is preferable. Praying in the mosque is preferable to praying in the loneliness of the home. Similarly giving *Zakat* in the precincts of the mosque is better as it would encourage others to follow suit. The non-mandatory prayers and charity and alms to poor and needy is better given in privacy. This will preclude the chance of giving a feeling to the people that the person is proud of his status and the recepients of the help might also feel embarrassed if the help is proferred in public.
- Then the Imam (a.s.) said," Offering *namaz e shab* was the practice of the Prophet (a.s.) and the pious persons followed suit. It removes pains and makes the faces radiant. One who offers these nightly prayers becomes good-natured and presentable. It boosts the means of livelihood of the person. The eight *rakaat* (genuflections) of *namaz e shab* are the adornment of the Hereafter for one who offers these prayers. It gives light to the eyes and expels sadness."
- It is mentioned in the traditions that *namaz e shab* enhances the radiance of the face and the fragrance of the body. It gives boost to the person's livelihood. The person who offers these prayers finds means of discharging his debts.

- In another tradition it is said that a household where the Quran is recited and the *namaz e shab* is offered, the house appears to the people of the Firmament as if it is a shining star.
- It is recorded that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said while making a commentary on the verse:

“*Innal hasanate yuzhibnal sayyiaat”*
No doubt virtues obliterate the sins

Said “ that the verse means that when a *momin* offers the *namaz e shab, his sins committed during the day are obliterated.”*

- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said,” Whosoever is given the privilege of offering *namaz e shab* by *Allah,* remains awake in the nights and with total dedication offers the prayer duly purifying himself with ablution, Allah will arrange nine rows of angels to join the prayer behind him. Only *Allah* will know the number of angels in each of the nine rows. One end of each row of the angels will be in the North and the other in the South. When the person completes the prayer, virtues will be added to his list (*Nama e Aamaal*) according to the number of angels who had offered prayers behind him. “
- It is narrated also from the Prophet that Allah will infuse light in the heart of the pious person who stands in prayer during the late hours of the night. When the person utters, “*Ya Rab, Ya Rab!”, Allah* responds with *“ Labbaek, Labbaek!” and says,”* O My creature! Ask for what you want from Me! Depend on Me that I am sufficient for the solution of your problems!” Then Allah tells to the angels, “ Look! How My creature stands in My Presence in the dead of the night! That is the time when the thoughtless persons will be in their slumbers. You must bear witness that I have obliterated the record of all his sins!”
- It is narrated in the traditions that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said,” Jibraeel always exhorts me about the *Namaz e Shab* so much that I worried perhaps the people in my *Ummah* might not get any sleep in the thought of this prayer.”
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that one who has faith in the Day of Reckoning and Allah will not let a night go when he has not performed the *Namaz e Shab.”*
- It is narrated that a person approached *Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)* and said, “ O Imam! I am unable to offer the *Namaz e Shab!” Hazrat Ali(a.s) said, “* Your sins are preventing you from doing so.” And added,” Hazrat Sulaiman (a.s.)’s mother advised him,’ O son! Don’t sleep much in the nights! Such a habit will render a person a beggar (*faqir*) on the Day of Reckoning!’”
- It is also narrated from Hazrat Ali (a.s.) that a person asked him to tell about the superiority and significance of the *Namaz e Shab.* The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ Be informed that when a person spends a tenth of the night in sincere supplication Allah would tell to the angels, “ Write virtues in the name of My creature equivalent to the leaves and flowers in the trees that grow on the banks of the Nile.” In another tradition it is mentioned that Allah orders the angels to write virtues in the record of a supplicant equal to the leaves in all the trees in the universe. The Imam (a.s.) said,” One who spends a ninth part of the night in prayer, his *Nama e Aamaal* will be placed in his right hand on the Day of

Judgement!" "A person who spends an eighth part of the night in supplication, Allah will give him the status of a martyr who fought valiantly in the way of Allah and met with death." " One who spends a seventh pary of the night in prayer, would rise from his grave with the face as radiant as the full moon and will cross the *Bridge of Siraat* with grteat ease!" " One who spends a sixth of the night in supplication will get pardon of his sins from Allah and would be counted in the group of repentent people." " One who spends a fifth of the night in prayer will find a place in the neighborhood of Hazrat Ibraheem (a.s.) in the Heaven." " One who spends a fourth of the night in supplication will will rise with the group of successful people on the Day of Judgement and will cross the *Bridge of Siraat* like a breeze and enter the precincts of the Heaven." " One who spends a third of the night in prayer Allah will endow him with such a status that every angel wishes to attain it. On the Day of Reckoning there will be Orders that he should have freedom to enter the Heaven through any of the gates he wished to use!" " One who spent half the night in prayer will get so much reward that if the entire surface of the earth is made of gold and offered to that *momin* in place of the Reward, he would refuse to accept it. This act of the person will be more valuable in the consideration of Allah than freeing seventy slaves from the progeny of Hazrat Ismail (a.s.)." " One who supplicates two thirds of the night, Allah will write virtues in his name equal to the grains of sand in a desert. The lowest number of virtues for such a person would be equal to ten times the size of the *Mount Ohad." "* One who supplicates the whole night, sometimes in prostration and at other in genuflection, sometimes reciting the Holy Quran and then uttering Allah's names, Allah will reward him so much that all his sins would be pardoned and would be as innocent as a just born baby. The virtues written in the name of such a person will be equal to the creatures in the world. The grave of the person would be filled with light. Jealousy and greed would be obliterated from his heart. He will be freed from the prosecution that takes place in the grave after death. He will be exempt from the Hellfire. He will be raised from the grave on the Day of Judgement who will be free of any fear of Retribution. Allah would say to the angels,' Look at my creature who spent the full night in My Remembrance. Give him a place in the *Jannat al Firdous* and give him a hundred thousand cities in the Heaven and every city should be adorned with what he wishes to have! Give him much more than what has already been endowed on him!"

- O Abu Dharr! Every spot of land where one puts his head down in prostration will bear witness on the Day of Judgement. There is no resting place where travellers tarry for rest that will not pray for their safety if they had offered their prayers in that place. The place will curse a person if he had committed any act contrary to the dictates of Allah while tarrying there.
- O Abu Dharr! There is no dawn or dusk when places don't call each other: " O my neighbor! Did any passerby talk of Allah while staying with you !? Did any traveller put his forehead down in prostration?" Some places would affirm that the travellers did prostrate in prayer and the others would own that they just rested and went their way. The place confirming about the visitors offering

prayers while visiting it would proudly feel that it had the privilege of people offering prayers to Allah while being its guests.

- Remember! Forgetfulness has so much engulfed the human race that the inanimate things are more adept at praying to Allah. The inanimate things, although in posession of very feeble senses, busy themselves in prayer.
- Someone asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) whether one should offer optional (*Naafila*) prayers at one place or at different places. The Imam (a.s.) replied that it is better to offer these prayers at different places that these places will bear witnerss to the act on the Day of Reckoning.
- It is narrated that when people assemble at a place and don't praise the Prophet and his Holy Progeny (a.s.), such assembly will be the harbinger of retribution of the concourse on the Day of Reckoning
- O Abu Dharr! When Allah created the land and trees grew on it, there was no tree from which the progeny of Adam had not derived benefit. The land and its flora kept providing benefits to man that he praised Allah for His Bounties. But the misguided said, " God has a son!" When this happened, the earth had a cataclysm and the benefits that the trees provided to man faded away. The Qureish believed that the angels are God's daughters. The Jews thought that Aziz (*of Egypt*) was God's son.The Christians said, " Jesus is the son of God".
- It is narrated from authentic sources that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " Allah has not created any tree that did not give fruits. But when people started saying that God has a son, half the flora went barren of fruits. And when people started being polytheist, many a tree grew thorns.
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.), " Allah deputed a messenger to a nation. He preached with them for forty year. He invited them to have faith in Allah, but none of the people agreed. The people of the place used to congregate on a festive occasion at a ground. On one such occasion the Messenger too went to the assemblage and said, " O people! Have faith in Allah! He is one and only and has no partners!" The people said, " O person! If you are the messenger of Allah, ask Him to give us fruits of the color of our robes!" That day the people were wearing orange colored dresses. The Messenger went a little distance from there and brought back a dried branch of a tree. He offered prayer and the dried branch became fresh and green. It put on orange fruits.. The people saw and ate the fruits. Those who got convinced of the existence of Allah found that the stone of the fruit was sweet. But the others who still had doubts, found the stones bitter.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " O Ali (a.s.)! There are three things that sooth the hearts of the *Momins:* 1. Meeting brother *momins.* 2. Breaking of the fasts. 3. Offering the late night prayers (*Tahajjud*)" The Prophet (a.s.) added, " O Ali (a.s.)! In my view offering two *Rakaat* of the night prayers is better than everything in the world. O Ali (a.s.)! A *momin* has an elevated status! When he dies, the angels lament in the Heaven because he was like a rampart for a city for the other *momins* against the evil intent of the Satan, the innovators and the infidels."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said, " We are incapable of praising Allah that He is beyond our comprehension! Similarly we cannot enumerate the qualities of the

Prophet of Islam (a.s.) because Allah says, ‘ His praise is My praise, his injunction is My injunction, his obedience is My obedience!’ Similarly we *Ahl al Bayt* cannot be praised that Allah has kept us free of all defects and rendered us pure. Also *momins* cannot be praised that when a *momin* meets another, his sins fall away as do the leaves in autumn!”

THE BENEFITS OF *MUA-NAQAH* OR EMBRACE

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, “ When two *momins* embrace each other, the Allah’s Blessing will be on them! When they embrace each other only to please Allah, without any worldly motives, the angels say,’ all your sins have been pardoned! Repeat the act of embrasure!’ When two *momins* start speaking, the angels responsible for recording the deeds of the people ask one other to stay away from them that perhaps they desire to exchange secrets and Allah wishes to keep them from others hearing!” The narrator asked, “ Do the angels not record these exchanges despite Allah observing

“*Ma yalfezu min qaulin illa ladaihe raqeebun aneed”*

- *No person utters a word which our chroniclers don’t record.*
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- The Imam (a.s.) took a sigh and said,” Allah has ordered the angels to keep away from them in reverence to their greatness. Although the angels don’t hear their conversation Allah (*Alam as sir wal khaffiyat*) knows their acts and hears their talk!”

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says,” A *momin* moves amidst five lights (*anwaar*).. In congregations (*majalis*) and matters of religion his entry and exit are both accompanied by light. .His knowledge is light and his talk has an aura of light. On the Day of Judgement a *momin’s* glance towards the bounties of Allah too is accompanied with light.
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- It is evident from the traditions that the actions and the morals of a person are a reflection of his faith. Shunning the mandatory acts and perpetration of major sins ostracises a person from the faith. Sometimes a pious person is termed a *momin,* sometimes a *shia* and at others a *wali.* A person is called a *momin* or *shia* when his actions are upright. .But one should not become proud and conceited learning about these traditions that define a *shia* and *momin.* One should understand that persons fitting the description of a *momin* are hard to come by..
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says, “ Allah has endowed a *momin* with three traits: 1. Respect in the world. 2. Deliverance in the Hereafter. 3. Fear in the hearts of the tyrants.”
- Some companions of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) approached him on a moonlit night. Impressed with the serene ambience, one of the companions told to the Imam (a.s.), “ How brilliant is the night with the moonlight and the stars. The attractiveness of the sky is enhancing with the passage of time.” The Imam (a.s.) said, “ When you say this about the sky, *Jibrael* and *Mekael* are waxing eloquent praising the brightness of the

earth and and the *momineen* living on it. *Izrael* and *Israfeel* too have a similar opinion about the earth.

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said that a *momin* is so important in the consideration of the Almighty that the angels in the Heaven know him well. The Prophet (a.s.) also added that a *momin* sees with the light provided by Allah.
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) that a *momin* should have the following qualities He should be calm and collected in times of accidents and calamities, in penury he should be patient and forbearing, he should be thankful and grateful in affluence, he should be contented with whatever Allah provides to him, he should not be harsh with his adversaries, he should not unjustly support his friends, he should be ready to bear hardship for the purpose of prayer and he should be considerate and caring of others. Knowledge is a friend and companion of a *momin.* Patience and tolerance are the viziers of a *momin* and fortitude the chief of his forces. Camaraderie and capability are a *momin's* brothers and good behaviour and manners are like his father.
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THE QUALITIES OF A MOMIN

Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) says," A *momin* remains silent that he desires to protect himself from sinning. He speaks with a purpose of getting reward from Allah. Whatever is told to him in confidence he never reveals to his best of friends.. What he bears witness to, he doesn't hide from his friends. Whatever good deed a *momin* does has no element of stealth in it. He is never ashamed of performing an act of prayer and obedience. If people praise him for his good qualities, he expresses fear that the praises might go to his head.. At such time he does *istighfar* seeking Allah's protection from the Satan that the person praising him is not aware of his faults. He doesn't remain oblivious of his own faults not to get carried away by the talk of others. A *momin* is always conscious of the the record keeers of his deeds (*the karamain Katibain)*

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.)says, " A *momin* is steadfast in his affairs of religion. Every moment he has the thought of the Hereafter in his mind. He behaves softly and affably with others. In faith he will be in the stage of firm belief. He will be always seeking knowledge on facts and the understanding of Allah (*Maarifath*). He enjoys tasks that help to enhance his knowledge. He performs good deeds with patience and justice. Despite possessing vast knowledge, he is humble in his behaviour with others. Although intellectually superior, he never makes a show of this trait to others. In the cause of truth he is bold and just. Even if he is rich, he adopts an equanimous way of life. If he is poor, he takes pride in his poverty. He is generous to a fault and forgives when others cause him some harm. Revenge is not in his nature. He considers goodwill for other Muslims as obedience to Allah. He controls evil desires with great

courage. Despite the pleasures of sin, he keeps himself away from such acts. He has great desire for Jehad. While at prayer, his mind is totally dedicated to Allah. In times ofg difficulty he is patient. He is never overwhelmed with the worldly hardships. He is thankful to Allah for the comforts and blessings available to him. He never does backbiting about others. He always thinks well of his kinsmen and friends. He is never tardy in doing a good deed. He is never short tempered and rude in his behaviour with others. He controls his eyes and whenever he views anything Allah's goodwill is always in his mind. To satisfy his palate he never does taboo things. Carnal desires never overwhelm him. He is free of all desire of jealousy. He is not a spendthrift but is always ready to help others to the extent possible. For making others comfortable, he is ready to bear some hardship. He doesn't run after worldly fame and pomp. He is never scared of the hardships that confront him. He can never be faulted for any act of his. When asked for his advice, he gives a considered opinion on matters. The poor and impecunious always look forward to his help. He abstains from foolish, bawdy and useless talk.

- Someone asked the Prophet of Islam (a.s.), " Kindly tell me about the qualities of a *momin.*" He said, " A *momin has twenty qualities. A person is not a* momin if he doesn't have these traits, his faith (*Eemaan)* will not be perfect. These traits are: A *momin* prays regularly, gives *Zakat*, feeds the hungry, is kind to orphans, wears neat and clean clothes, does supplication to Allah with great fervor, never tells lies, he always keeps his promises, shows great integrity, always upholds the truth, supplicates during the nights, lives boldly during the days, makes sincere effort in the way of truth, remains awake in the nights and fasts during the day, is kind to his neighbors, is helpful to widows, joins the funeral processions, takes part in Jehad and walks on the land with humility. May Allah help us to acquire the traits of a *Momin."*
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that someone asked the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) to give a description of good pewople. The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " A good person is one from whose hands and tongue people are safe. A good person is one who thanks Allah for the bounties endowed on him. In times of difficulty he should be patient and equanimous. When someone inflicts hardship on him unnecessarily, he should bear it patiently and forgive the person. When he commits a sin, he should seek Allah's forgiveness (*Astaghfar*)

THE SHIAS OF ALI

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says," The Shias of Ali (a.s.) are the people whose stomachs touch their backs as an effect of hunger. Their lips will be parched dry with fasting. They are kind of disposition and serious of demeanour. They are intelligent people and well known for intensity in their prayers. Therefore friends! Assume piety and help us intercede on your behalf on the Day of Reckoning! Busy yourselves in prayer and obedience to Allah."

- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that one day Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) was one day offereing his morning prayer in Iraq. After the prayer he delivered

a sermon. . Talking of the fear of Allah the Imam (a.s.) cried. The others too cried a lot. Then he said," By Allah's Greatness! I have seen a group of *momins* in the time of the Prophet of Islam (a.s.). They used to be unkempt, dusty and of emaciated bodies.. Their stomachs used to cling to their backs. The foreheads of these *momins* were calloused because of perpetual prostration. These calousses were like the ones that are found on the flanks of the camels. Offering prayers and prostrations in the nights they used to see the dusk in this act. They used to cry inconsolably seeking protection of Allah from the Hellfire. When Allah's name was mentioned before them, they used to shiver like the tree in times of strong winds. This used to be their condition whenever they thought of Allah's Retribution. And when I see the people now I find them in a state of oblivian and forgetfulness. After delivering this sermon Hazrat Ali (a.s.) went to *Bayt al Sharaf* and never ever laughed till the day he was martyred."

- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that someone inquired of the Prophet of Islam (a.s.), " Ya Hazrat! Who are the good and noble creatures of Allah?" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " These are the people who perpetrate good deeds and if ever they commit any sin they seek Allah's forgiveness by doing *Asthagfar.* When Allah bestows a bounty on them, they thank Him profusely. When confronted with any calamity, they are patient and forbearing. When angry on others, they generously forgive.
- One night Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) was proceeding from the mosque towards the wilderness of Najaf. It was a moonlit night. He noticed some persons following behind him. He tarried and asked them, " Who are you?" They said, " Ya Hazrat! We are your Shias." The Imam (a.s.) looked at them and said, " Your appearances are not those of Shias!" The men said, " Ya Hazrat! How do your Shias look?" He replied, " With sleepless nights in prayer their faces will be flushed. As a result of excessive crying, their eyes look like the eyes of blind persons. Their backs will be hunched because of excessive genuflection in prayer. Because of spending most of the days in fasting their stomachs touch their backs. Because of constant prayer the lips of these persons will be dry and parched. Their fear of Allah (*Khushu wa Khuzu*) is reflected from their faces."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says," A *momin* cannot be a possessor of faith unless he has perfect intelligence. The intelligence cannot be perfect unless the person has the following ten traits:

1. People expect good treatment from him.
2. People donot expect ill treatment from him.
3. He rates his good deeds as very little.
4. He considers others' small good turns of great value.
5. He considers his small fault as major and rates others major faults as trivial.
6. He never tires of giving ear to the seekers of help.
7. He tirelessly works in search of knowledge.
8. He prefers ignominy over worldly fame.
9. He prefers penury over riches and remains contented with small worldly comforts.
10. The tenth trait is the most difficult. Whenever he meets anyone, he rates the person more pious and better than himself.

- The Imam (a.s.) further said," There are two types of men. There are some who consider all others better and more pious than themselves. The other type is of people

who consider others inferior to themselves.. The best attitude is that when one finds a person better than himself , he should interact with him humbly and try to emulate his good qualities.. When he finds a person who appears inferior to himself, he should think that the person might have some latent qualities worthy of emulation..” The Imam (a.s.) also added, “ Adopting this attitude you will acquire respect and eminence.”

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that one day the Prophet (a.s.) met Haritha bin Noman Ansari and said,” O Haritha! How was your morning today?” Haritha said, “ Ya Hazrat! I started the morning with perfect faith and firm belief!” The Prophet (a.s.) said,” Every thing needs a proof. What is the proof that your faith is perfect?” Haritha said, “ Ya Hazrat! My heart is dejected with the world. I have no interest in the world. This belief has encouraged me to pray during the nights and fast during the days. This is tantamount to say that I see the accounting of deeds in Allah’s Firmament. I perceive that the people of the Heaven interact with each other happily and the people of the Hell are undergoing the Retribution.” The Prophet (a.s.) said, “ No doubt! You are a *momin.* Allah has illumined your heart with faith. Remain steadfast in this condition. May Allah help you in your endeavour!” Haritha said, “ Ya Hazrat! I have fear of nothing that can involve me in sins other than my eyes.” The Prophet (a.s.) prayed for him and Haritha went blind that the cause of his fear of sinning was removed.
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) came across a group of riders. He inquired of them, “ Who are you?” They replied that they were *momins.* The Prophet (a.s.) asked them to give a proof of being *momins.* They said, “ Ya Hazrat! We are committed to Allah’s wish. We obey His Commandments. We entrust all our affairs to Allah and only trust in Him.” The Prophet (a.s.) said, “ These persons are wise and sagacious. With their wisdom and sagacity they have come quite close to the status of prophethood!” Then the Prophet (a.s.) added,” If you wish to befriend Allah, don’t make an abode in this world that it is transient. Don’t amass weath that you will not be able to consume it. Beware of Allah’s adversary that soon you will have to return to Him (Allah)!”

THE REWARD FOR ADHAN & IQAMAT

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said,” O Abu Dharr! When a *momin,* alone in the wilderness, can do *Tayyamum* (dry ablution) if water is not handy, say the *Adhan* and the *Iqaamah* and offer his prayer. Allah orders His angels to join in prayer with this *momin* in large numbers. The angels are ordered to form rows behind the *momin* that nothing else is visible to the extent a human eye could see. When the *momin* does genuflection, the angels too follow suit as people do in a congregational prayer. Likewise when the *momin* prostrates, the angels too prostrate.. In the end when the *momin* supplicates, the angels say *Aameen*.” The Prophet (a.s.) added, “ O Abu Dharr! If this *momin* only says *iqamah,* at the mandatory time of a compulsory prayer, and not the *Adhaan*, then only the two angels who are always in attendance with the person will join him in the prayer.”

Some jurists deem it compulsory to say the *Adhaan* and *Iqamah* for every mandatory prayer while others say that *Iqamah* is sufficient. Some say that both *Adhaan* and *Iqamah* are compulsory for the morning and evening prayers. .The latter is a better practice.

Adhaan and *Iqamah* are prescribed only for the mandatory prayers. The optional prayers can be offered without saying the *Adhaan* and *Iqamah.* Those who say these for the optional prayers are commiting a *bidaa* (an innovation).

- It is narrated ina tradition of the Prophet (A.S) that one who says the *Adhaan* with true spirit will get Reward from Allah equivalent to that for forty thousand martyrs and forty thousand men of piety (*siddiqoon*). On the intercession of this person Allah will admit forty thousand sinners into the Heaven. Remember, when the *meuezzin* says ' *Ash-haduan la ilaha il Allah'* ninety thousand angels say *Durood* (Invoke Allah's Blessings) for him. They also seek Allah's forgiveness (*Astaghfar*) for him. .On the Day of Reckoning this person will be under the shadow of Allah's Firmament till he is through with the process of accounting. When the *Meuezzin* says '*Ash-haduanna Muhammedan Rasool Allah'* forty thousand angels record blessings for him. Any person who takes precedence to join the first row of a prayer congregation, and listens to the first *Takbeer* (announcement of commencement of the prayer) he will be getting reward equivalent to that of many *meuezzins.* But there is a proviso that this person has never been the cause of harm to any *muslim.*
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that a person who says the *Adhaan* for ten years in the cause of Allah, his sins, as far as he can think of having perpetrated, will be pardoned. The voice of such a person would reach the very Firmament. All the animate and inanimate objects in the vicinity of the place where he recited the *Adhaan* would bear witness to the fact. He would also get a share of the reward of the persons who pray in the congregation at the mosque in respone to his calling the *Adhaan.* As the numbers of worshippers swell at the mosque in respons to his *Adhaan,* his account of good deeds too will swell accordingly.
- Hazrat Bilal narrates from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that the *meuezzins* are the keepers of the believers. They are also the keepers of their mandatory fasts and prayers. Whatever they ask in return for this service, Allah would grant them. On whomsoevers behalf they intercede, Allah would accept the intercession. The Prophet (a.s.) also said that when a person continuously says the *Adhaan* in the name of Allah for forty years, Allah will give to him the reward equivalent to that for forty truthful ones (*Siddeeqoon*).. One who says the *Adhaan* for ten years will get a place in the accommodation (*Qubba*) of Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.). One who says the *Adhaan* for one year, his sins, as heavy as the mountains, would be forgiven on the Day of Judgement.. If a person says the *Adhaaan* only once at the precribed time of prayer, Allah will forgive all his past sins and protect him from commiting any more sins.. He will be given the status of martyrs in the Heaven.
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) , " The *Meuezzin*, in the interregnum between the *Adhaan* and the *Iqamat*, gets the reward equivalent to that of a martyr who flails his limbs in a gory condition and dies in the cause of Allah. A person who is not getting off-springs should recite the *Adhaan* within the four walls of his house."

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq(a.s.) narrates that the Prophet of Allah(a.s.) has said," When you come across evil spirits (*Ghouls)* on the way, recite the *Adhaan* aloud and they would flee." " When a person says the *Adhaan* and *Iqaman* before praying, two rows of angels join in the prayer behind him. . If he says only the *Iqamat,* only one row of angels joins him in the prayer.The row of angels behind the person will be equal to the distance between the east and the west. And equal to the distance between the earth and the sky."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that three types of persons would be sent to the Heaven in large numbers: 1.The just Imams. 2. The honest traders. 3. The old person who spends his life in obedience of Allah."
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) that seven type of person will be under the shade of the *Firmament* on the Day of Judgement. On that fateful day, there won't be any other shade for the multitudes than this. These seven categories of persosn will be: !. The just Imams. 2. The youth who spent his time in the worship of Allah. 3. A person who comes out of the mosque but his heart is in the mosque. 4. The two companions who were together while going for the congregations. 5. The person who thinks of Allah while alone and gets tears in his eyes with His fear.6. A person who is tempted by a beautiful damsel to sin, but out of fear of Allah he abstains. 7. A person who does charity in secret that his right hand gives and the left hand is not aware of the act."

THE REWARD OF RECITING THE QURAN

It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) that when a young *momin recites the Holy Quran,* the quran will become a part of his flesh and blood. Allah will raise him on the Day of Reckoning with the Prophets (a.s.) and angels. The *Holy Quran* will express its love for him and say,'O Allah! Every person expects reward for his good acts! Therefore I demand rewards for the persons who used to recite me!' Then Allah would bestow two *Hillas* (Heavenly Raiment) to the youth. The crown of excellence would be placed on his head. Then Allah would ask the Holy Quran,' Are you happy now?' The Holy Book would then respond, ' O Allah! I expected much more than this! Your reward is far less than the person deserves!' Then Allah would award to the person the pemit to enter the Heaven in his right hand and the permit not to enter the Hell in his left hand. The person will then be admitted to the Heaven and asked to recite one verse from the Quran and enter the higher echelons of the Heaven. Now Allah will ask the Quran,' Are you happy now?' The Quran would respond,' No doubt! I am happy now!'.

- The Imam (a.s.) also said," When a person recites the Holy Quran to learn it by-heart, Allah will double the reward for the person."

- “ A person who recites the Quran for the benefit of the unlettered, it will be like doing the Jehad. Heaven will be mandatory for such a person.
- The Prophet of Allah(a.s.) said,” O Abu Dharr! Don’t adopt the company of any other person than a *momin.* Share your repast with none other than the pious. Don’t share the table with hypocrites and evil persons. O Abu Dharr! You share your food with those whom you consider your friends and share the food with those who keep your friendship for the sake of Allah!"
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says,” My revered father, Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.), has said,’ O son! Don’t meet, converse or befirend five types of persons: 1.Don’t sit in the company of a liar. He will be like a mirage that distant things seem near to you and nearer objects as distant. 2. Don’t keep the company of a hypocrite that he can sell you for a morsel or less. 3. Don’t befriend a parsimonious person who will value his money more than you in time of your need. 4. Don’t be friends with a fool that with all good intentions he might put you to harm in his foolishness. 5. Don’t befirend a person who deprives the rights of his kin (*Qateh e Rahem*). In the Holy Quran Allah curses such a person thrice.”
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.), in one of his sermons, said,” O Believers! It is necessary that you refrain from the company of three types of persons: 1. The shameless sinners and hypocrites. 2. Foolish idiots. 3. The liars.” He added,” The hypocrite will present to you the bad deeds as good and try to make you follow in his footsteps. He will not guide you properly in the matters of faith. His company will be the cause of shame for you. The company of a foolish person will not help to take the right path. Don’t expect him to come to your succor in times of difficulty, however much he tries to do it. Don’t expect any happiness from the company of a liar. He will tell lies to others about you. .To uphold one falsehood, he will invent many lies.. Even if such a person tells a truth, people wouldn’t believe him. He might create enmities amidst people by telling lies. You must always seriously consider whose friendship you should cultivate.”
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says,” Be friends with a person who makes you cry with the fear of Allah and is your wellwisher. Don’t follow one who makes you laugh and tricks you into faults. Soon you will have to go before Allah for accounting of your deeds.!”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says,” Amongst my brothers the best friend is one who points out my faults to me.” And added,” There are limits to friendship and truthfulness. Those who don’t recognise these limits, they don’t realise the value of truthfulness. A true friend is one who: 1. Keeps the same attitude with you openly and in secret. 2. Who considers what is good for him as good for you, and what is bad for himself he considers bad for you. 3. If he acquires high station in society, doesn’t change his behaviour towards you. 4. He doesn’t deny you what he has control over. 5. He doesn’t cold shoulder you if you are confronted with any worldly hardship.”
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that the most felicitous person is one who keeps the company of good persons. Hazrat Eeesa (a.s.) was once asked by his companions,” O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! What sort of person we should befriend?” Her said,” Looking at whom you remember Allah! Their talk enhances your knowledge! Their deeds make you seek the rewards of the Hereafter!”

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says," One who sits in a place of ill-repute should not complain against persons pointing fingers at him!"
- The Imam (a.s.) said," When a person keeps his own counsel, he keeps control over himself. If he reveals his matter to two persons, it becomes public property!"
- He also said," Think well of the actions of your brother *momin* and whatever he utters accept as the truth. Try to cultivate virtuous friends as far as possible. Such friends are the ornaments in good times and the shields during the times of hardship. "
- " If you need to consult someone in difficult matters, seek the counsel of the God Fearing persons."
- "Keep friendship with your brothers to the extent that they are God Fearing."
- " Abstain from the company of women of ill-repute and maintain distance from women of good character too! Even if the women encourage you to do something good, abstain from it that you don't don't get embroiled in any evil deed."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says," A person who cannot give you benefit in your faith, never trust his friendship! Don't crave his company because an action that is not in the way of Allah its end is never good!"
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.)," There are three types of persons whose friendship extinguishes the heart: !. Mean and timid persons. 2. Women. 3. Rich persons.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says," There are four things that become useless and vanish: 1.Friendship with an unfaithful person. 2. Good turn done to an ungrateful person. 3. Advice and precept to persons who don't give a ear to such talk.4. Secrets that are revealed to irresolute persons."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says:" The company of rich persons should be avoided. One who sits near them feels in the beginning that he has been endowed with every bounty, but with passage of time he starts thinking that he has received nothing."
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said," Four things kill one's heart: 1. Sinning repeatedly.2. Talking a lot with women. 3. Arguing with a foolish person. 4. Sitting near the dead." The companions asked him," O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! Who are the dead?" The Prophet (a.s.) replied," The dead are the rich persons who have become head-strong with possession of extreme wealtrh!"
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said," Feeding the *momins* is a very good deed. Always feed others that some of them might qualify as *momins* and become the cause of reward for you"
- A person who feeds a hungry *momin* Allah will satiate him with the fruits of the Heaven. Whoever gives a draught of water to a *momin* Allah will provide him with sealed beverages in the Heaven. Whoever clothes a *momin* will get raiment of silk and satin (*Hareer wa istabarq*) in the Heaven. As long as a thread of the garment given to a *momin* remains, the angels keep praising the bebnefactor. Whoever helps a *momin* in his time of need, Allah will give him a place in the shadow of the Firmament on the Day of Judgement.. At that time others will be facing extreme heat in the Ground of Resurrection."
- It is authentically narrated that Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said," Three things elevate a *momin* : Greeting everyone. 2. Feeding people. 3. Praying at the time while others are lulled by sleep."

FEEDING THE MUSLIM BROTHERS

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said," Whoever feeds three Muslims, Allah will give him three meals in the Heaven. !. The meal from *Malakoot al Samawat in Jannat al Firdous.* 2. The meal from *Jannat e Aden.* 3. The meal from *Tooba* which is a tree in the Heaven. This tree has been planted by Allah in the *Garden of Eden.*

- The acts that earn Allah's forgiveness include feeding of the hungry Muslims to their satiation.
- Whoever quenches the thirst of a Muslim in a place where water is scarce, against every gulp of water seventy thousand good deeds will be entered in his account of deeds. He will get reward equal to freeing ten persons from the progeny of Hazrat Ismail (a.s.). When a guest enters a home, he sends away the sins of the inmates of the house.
- At one place the Prophet (a.s.) said, " When guests come, they come with many hopes and when they depart they go as a cause of your Deliverence."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, " Whoever entertains a rich person over a meal, he will get reward equal to saving a progeny of Hazrat Ismail (a.s.) from getting executed.. One who feeds a poor *momin,* his reward will be equal to saving a hundred persons from the progeny of Hazrat Ismail (a.s.)."
- Feeding a *momin* once is better than releasing ten slaves and performing Haj ten times. .
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has prohibited people from accepting invitation of the hypocrites.
- The Prophet (a.s.) said," O Abu Dharr! Refrain from irrelevent talk. It is enough for you to talk as much as it is necessary!"
- He added, " O Abu Dharr! It is sufficient to make a person a liar if he keeps repeating to persons what he has heard from others!" Remember, there is none more deserving of locking up than the tongue. While repeating any talk it is better to reveal the name of the person who originally talked about it. If the narrater is pious and truthful, he will get the reward. If it is a falsehood, the original narrator will get the punishment.
- The Prophet (a.s.) said, " O Abu Dharr! Respect the following types of persons: 1. The persons who follow the precepts of the Holy Quran. 2. Respecting the just and kind ruler.
- Jabir Jaufi narrates that Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said," O Jabir! For a person who claims to be a shia , it is sufficient only to proclaim his love for us, the *Ahl al Bayt*? By Allah! Our Shia is only the person who is afraid and obedient of Allah. Our Shias are recognised by their hospitable natures and kind hearts, they are men of integrity and busy in the thoughts of Allah. They are regular at their prayers and fasting, they treat their parents well, they care for their neighbors, poor, needy and the orphans. They are truthful and regularly recite the Holy Quran. They keep their mouths shut about others except in the matters of *Amr bil maroof nahi an il munkar*

(the matters of dos and don’ts according to *Shariah*), they are accepted as trustworthy in their family circles.” Jabir Jaufi said, “ These days I don’t find anyone fitting this description!” The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ O Jabir! Beware! Lest the different routes take you astray! People thought it sufficient to merely claim the love for Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and to express acceptance his *Wilaya* (Supremacy) without trying to be righteous and practicing the precepts of Islam. Therefore, if a person says that he has love for the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) who is better than Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and he does not follow the *seerat* (example) and the *Sunna* (the traditions) of the Prophet (a.s.) then he will not get any benefit for his shallow expression of love for the Prophet (a.s.). Therefore, have fear of Allah and participate in the good deeds prescribed by Him. Remember! There is no relationship between Allah and anyone else. The dearest person in the view of Allah is one who is pious and obedient to Him. O Jabir! Nearness of Allah is possible only for the person who is obedient to Him! We don’t have any permit for exclusion from the Hellfire! Whosoever is obedient to Allah, he is from ouir friends. Whoever is sinning against Allah, he is our enemy. Our *Wilaya* reaches only those who are practicing piety and good deeds.”

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ Our Shia is one who guards against two things: One is the thing that lies between the two cheeks and the other that lies between the two loins.”
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said,” Two persons will have the shade of the Firmament over their heads when even the virtuous would fend only for themselves: The first is the one: who prays and laments in loneliness and the second is one who is in company of a young and strange damsel but is not attracted towards her.”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ A perfect *momin* is one who has ten qualities: 1. People expect good from him. 2. The people are not afraid of any harm from him. 3. Who considers his own good deeds as trivial. 4. Who considers his small mistakes as big sins. 5. He considers others’ small good deeds as big. 6. He considers others’ big sins as trivial. 7. He keeps himself busy in acquiring knowledge throughout his life. 8. He considers a poor person better than the rich. 9. He is contented with the sustenence he gets. 10. He rates every one he meets better than himself.”
- One companion asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.),” O Maula! Please describe a *momin* to me!” The Imam (a.s.) pointed towards the wall in front of them and said,” A *momin* is one who can order the wall to turn to gold and it would turn to gold! “ When the companion looked towards the wall, he found that it had turned to gold! He was astonished and asked, “ O Maula! You didn’t order the wall to turn to gold and had just told me as an example of the trait of a *momin.* Even then the wall turned to gold!” The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ This is the difference between a *momin* and the *Amir al Momineen!”*
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said charity (*Sadaqa*) is a big form of piety. What your right hand gives as charity, your left should not know about!”
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, “ O Abu Dharr! Don’t seek the company of anyone other than a *momin.* Share your fare with a *momin.* O Abu Dharr! Invite one to the meal who is a friend of Allah and he befriends you because of Allah! Abstain from the company of bad people lest they turn you bad. A good person too appears bad in the company of the evil!”

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ Four things are a waste: 1. Friendship of a disloyal person. 2. Doing a good turn to an ungrateful person. 3. Moralising an inattentive person. 4. Revealing one’s own secret to a foolish person.”
- It is narrated that the Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) was coming out of the mosque one night. He went towards the wilderness of Najaf. . He had gone some distance when he noticed some persons were coming behind him. When the persons came near him, he asked who they were.. They said that they were his *Shias. The Imam (a.s.) looked cursorily at their faces and said, “* I find that your foreheads are not those of my Shias!” They asked, “ O Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)! How are the foreheads of your Shias?” He replied, “ Therir faces are yellow. Their eyes look like the eyes of blind persons due to spending late nights in prayer. They have hunched backs because of excess of prayers and their tummies almost touch their backs because of excessive fasting. Their lips are parched because of excessive supplication and they give the appearance of persons in fear."
- Hussain bin Naam narrates that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) asked him if he loved a brother *momin?* He affirmed that he did love *momins.* The Imam (a.s.) asked did he ever share his meals with *momins?* He said that generally one or more guests are there to share his food. The Imam (a.s.) said, “ They are more generous to you in this act than you are in feeding them!” He asked, “ How is it! It is I who shares the sumptuous fare with them?” The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ When they enter your threshold the sins of all the members of your family are pardoned. When they depart they take away all the sins of the inmates.”
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said that repeating hearsay too is tantamount to lying.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, “ If ever you repeat the hearsay, tell the name of the person who narrated the story to you. Then you will get rewarded if the matter is true and if it is a falsehood, the punishment will go to the one who told you the lie.”
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, “ O Abu Dharr! Respect the grey bearded Muslim. Respect those who follow the precepts set by the Holy Quran. Respect the just ruler. All these acts are akin to showing respect to Allah. We are describing these as three *Yanabeeh* or streams in the following chapter..

CHAPTER : 12

THE YANABEEH OR STREAMS

THE FIRST STREAM ABOUT AGED MUSLIMS

Allah respects the grey haired Muslims. It is an authentic tradition that one must treat youngsters with affection and the elders with respect.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " One who reaches fifty years of age will have the accounting easier on the Day of Judgement. One who reaches sixty years of age, even the angels will be friendly towards him. One who touches seventy, his atonement for sins will be accepted. Allah will order the angels to record only the good deeds of the person who reached the age of eighty years. One who reaches ninety years, all his past sins will be pardoned and even the sins that he might commit later might be forgiven. .He will be listed in the group of Allah's captives and will intercede on behalf of his kinsmen on the Day of Judgement.

THE SECOND STREAM
ABOUT SUPERIORITY OF THE HOLY QURAN

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that if you have a matter that appears like the darkest of dark nights and you are unable to ravel the puzzle, then the Holy Quran, the brightest of lights, will help you dispel all the doubts you have pertaining to the matter. This will help one in strife, in solving irresoluble problems and is the beacon for showing the way to Jannat. It is the negligence of the Quran that might dispatch one to the Hellfire! Quran is the best Guide and Leader. This is the Book that has in it all the commandments and details. It has two types of commandments—clear and hidden. Its clear aspect is full of Allah's Commandments to humanity. The hidden aspect of the Quran is about unending store of knowledge. The clear aspect of the Book is a harbinger of good for its followers and the hidden aspect is profound. There are some stars, big and small (*Kawakib*) for it's interpretation. These stars are Infallible Imams (a.s.) who put the wayward on the right path. These Infallible Imams (a.s.) possess the knowledge about the Quran. From them only the Knwledge can be acquired. They are the ones who disseminate the Knowledge about the Book. The Chapter of *Bara-at* is proclaiming in the Holy Quran that the chapter could be presented to the infidels of Mecca either by the Prophet (a.s.) himself or his *Nafs (*the personal and rational mouthpiece).

Men have to perceive with the eyes of their hearts the path shown by these Infallible Imams (a.s.) and follow them with true hearts. They have said that the Quran is a guide for the ignorant, helper for those who go astray, a light in the darkness, the best friend in

this world and the Hereafter. The Quran contains the complete faith within its two covers.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " Allah, who has the knowledge of everything hidden, has sent this Book to you. This Book has knowledge about the things past and those to come. .It has the information about the land and the firmament. Those who have total knowledge of the Quran (*The Aalam*) and the practitioners (*perhaps here the Infallible Imams are meant)* can reveal facts about the hidden matters (*the Ghaib*)."
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " I am departing from you midst and leaving behind two weighty things--- One is the Book of Allah and the other is my *Itrat (*the progeny) and *Ahl al Bayt* (the Infallible Imams). If you remain attached to these two, you shall never go astray!"

A note by Maulana Syed Ali Akthar Amrohi: This was one and only prescription for the welfare of Islam and unity of the Muslims. If the Muslims honestly followed this tradition of the Holy Prophet (a.s.), they wouldn't have followed different teachers and the schism of 73 sects wouldn't have come about!

THE SUPERIORITY OF BEARERS OF THE HOLY QURAN

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said that, " When on the Day of Judgement people will be brought for accounting of their deeds, the Quran will be there in the form of a handsom and good looking person to bear witness. It will say," O Allah! This *momin* spent sleepless nights reciting me! At the time of the *Tahajjud* prayer in the night he used to have parched lips and wet eyes. O Allah! Forgive him his mistakes! ' Allah will fill the person's right hand with His Acceptance (*Raza*) and the left hand with His Blessings (*Rehmat*) and will enter the Heaven reciting the Quran." Then the Prophet (a.s.) added, " After the Superior prophets (*Anbiah*) and other prophets (a.s.), the reciters of the Quran will have a high status in the Heaven. Don't under-rate the people who recite the Quran! They have a great status in the eyes of Allah!'

- In another tradition the Prophet (a.s.) has said," Allah addresses the Holy Quran thus,' I swear by My Greatness! Whosoever respected you, I shall respect him! One who belittled you, I shall belittle him!'"
- It is narrated from the Prophet (a.s.) that he said, " Recite the Quran and memorise it! On the Day of Judgement the Holy Quran will approach those who recited it. It will be in the guise of a very good looking person. It will say, ' I am the same Quran reciting which you spent sleepless nights. During the days you moved with parched lips because of loss of sleep in the nights! Because of excessive recitation the moisture in your mouth used to run dry. Tears used to run from your eyes because of the strain of reading! Therefore, wherever you go, I shall be with you! Whatever trading you wish to do, do it today! I am there with you to bring to you more profits than other traders can get! I bear witness that Allah's Blessings are about to come

your way!' " Then a crown will be brought and placed over the head of the person and the letter of permission for freedom from Allah's Retribution will be placed in the person's right hand. In his left hand letter of permission for perpetual residence in the Heaven will be placed. Two Heavenly Raiments (*Hillay*) will be given to him to wear. He will be Ordered,' Recite the Holy Quran, and for every verse recited, you will rise one step higher in the Heaven!' " If the parents of the reciter of the Quran were *momin,* they too will be provided two *Hillay* each and will be told that this reward was in rturn for instructing their son in the recitation of the Holy Quran.

- It is narrated from the Holy Prophet, (a.s.) " The noble and big persons among my people (Ummat *)* are those who are the bearers (*Hamilan*) of the Quran and remain awake in the nights in prayer. The bearers of the Quran will be termed superior amongst the people of the Heaven.."
- Allah will not give Retribution to the Heart that has memorised the Holy Quran. The bearers of the Quran will be in the second echelon in the Heaven after the Prophets (a.s.). Therefore, don't under-rate the reciter of the Holy Quran. They have a very high status in the consideration of Allah."

THE QUALITIES OF THE RECITERS OF THE QURAN

The phrase *Haamilan e Quran* (Bearers of the Quran) has several meanings:

First, one should properly learn the words in the Quran.

Secondly: he should learn the correct meaning of the contents of the Book. Such a person will have a status higher than the first.

Thirdly: One should practice the Quranic precepts. Therefore, the true bearer of the Quran is one who understands the words, their meanings and practitioner of the Quranic Precepts.

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that the Holy Quran is the table laid with the Bounties of Allah.as there will be various types of victuals on the table of a generous person.

There are some people who draw benefit from the words of the Quran. There are other who benefit from the meanings of the Quran. The people who supply the ink for writing or printing the Book or those who supply the paper too derive benefit from the Holy work. In a nutshell, everyone associated with the publication, translation, commentary, and distribution of the Book gets his share of reward for the work.

To put it briefly, people of all fields such as scholars, jurists, mathematicians, poets, scholars etc derive benefit from the Quran's unfathomable store of knowledge. Those who possess total control over the contents of the Quran are the Prophet and his Infallible Descendents (a.s.). Therefore the very word 'Quran" is associated with them.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has observed, " I am the Speaking Quran (*Quran e Natiq*)" All the knowledge contained in the Quran is in the possession of the Infallible Imams. It is said that a third of the Quran has come in the praise of the *Infallible Masoomeen*, another third of the Book as criticism of the enemies of the *Ahl al Bayt* and the rest contains the commandments about the duties and precepts for the Believers. Whatever good qualities that are alluded to in the Quran pertains to the *Ahl al Bayt* and whatever criticism is there is about their enemies.. From where has the Quran in its present shape come? First it was with Allah (*Ilm e Wajib al Wajood*), then it was transcribed to the *Lauh* (the Tablet), then it was revealed to the Propphet(a.s.) directly or indirectly through the Angel Gibraeel. From the Prophet (a.s.)'s heart it was transferred to the hearts of the *Ausia* (the Infallible Descendents) and then it was rendered to paper.

Therefore, the real Quran is one that is etched on the hearts of the Infallible Imams (a.s.). When those who show disrespect to the Quran printed on paper are rated infidels, then those who showed disrespect to the *Quran e Naatiq* will be the worst of infidels.

It is said about the Holy Prophet (a.s.) that the Quran is his character and he is the character of the Quran. In fact the real Quran are those Infallible Personalities who have in them the words, the meanings and the character of the Quran. Now, for one to understand the opt repeated tradition quoted by Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the Quran would come on the Day of Judgement in the garb of a handsome person and intercede on behalf of those who recited or studied it. The Imam (a.s.) also said that *Salat* (the Prayer) has a face and tells about *Amr wa Nahi* (dos and donts).

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," Haj and circumambulation of the Kaaba is necessary because after these rituals the people should meet us to learn about the tenets of the Faith"

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said," There are three categories of the reciters of the Holy Quran: 1. Those who recite the Book for worldly gains, name and fame. 2. Those who recite the Quran but don't act on it's precepts.(Allah will rid the world of these two types of people). 3.Those who consider the Quran as a cure for the ailments of their hearts. They remain awake in the nights and light the lamps of spirituality in the mosques and the homes. They derive benefit from the recitation of the Book themselves and for the Love of Allah (*Qurbatan il Allah*) pass the benefit to others. With the blessings of such persons Allah wards off calamities in store for people. But there are very few such dedicated reciters of the Book

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," Derive ornamentation from the Quran for Allah and not to show to the people! One who completes the recitation of the Quran has acquired the messengership (*Paighambari*) between his flanks that has no element of revelation! The reciter of the Quran should abstain from the company of ignorant persons. He should stay away from carnal desires and worldly wants. He should be grateful to Allah that He has made him the reciter of the Quran who becomes eligible for the Riches of the Hereafter!

THE ETIQUETTE OF RECITING THE HOLY QURAN

Qir-at or recitation of the Quran has one basic requirement, that is, *the Tarteel* or the distinct intonation and pronunciation of the words. While reciting one has to keep in mind the *fasl* {division) and *wasl (* joining) of words and sentences.
Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that *Tarteel* is delivering words according to their *Makharij* (outlets for sound or intonations). Uttering the words clearly and slowly and reciting with understanding and uttering the contents correctly is of prime importance. One should not recite the Quran with such speed that it might become incomprehensible and bore the listener. Neither the recitation be so slow that it takes long time and puts the listeners off.. *"Khair al umoore ausatha"* or it is better to follow the middle path.

The other important aspect of the recitation is the reading with understanding and thought. One should keep his eyes on the meanings of the Quran. While reciting the verses about Allah's Blessings, one should seek *Astaghfar (*Allah's Help and Foregiveness).

Imam Raza (a.s.) used to recite the Quran with feelings and tears. He used to cry when reference to the Heaven and Hell came during the reading of the Book. At these points he used to seek Allah's Help. When the Imam (a.s.) recited the verse *Qul huwallahu ahad* , he used to say *Kadhalik Allahu Rabbi* three times. Similarly after reciting the verse *Qul ya ayyuhal kaferoon* in the prayer, the Imam used to say *Rabbi Allaho Deenalislam* three times. After reciting the verse *Wat-teene wazaitune* Imam Reza (a.s.) used to say *bala wa ana zaalika min al shahedeen.* On reciting the verse *Ala uqsimo beyoumilqiyamah* the Imam (a.s.) said *Subhanaka Allahumma Balah.* On reciting *Sura e Fateha* the Imam (a.s.) said *Alhamdu lillahe Rab al Aalemeen.* Whenever the Imam (a.s.) came across the words *ya ayyuhal lazeena aamanu* during the recitation of the Quran he would say slowly the words *Labbaek Allahumma labbaek.*

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said that whenever one recited *In Allaha malaekatahu yusalloona alan-nabi….* It should be followed by benediction (*durood*) whether during the prayers or while at the session of recitation. He said that after reciting the verse *wat-teen* one should say *Nahnu ala zalika min al shahedeen.*

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) used to say *deenilislam alaihi ahya-an wa alaihi amwaatu insha Allah* after reciting the verse *Qul ya ayyuhal kaferoon.*

Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) has said, " If a person wishes to converse with Allah, he should recite the Quran. When he comes to the passages where Allah addresses the people, he should say *labbaek Allahumma labbaek* and in the passages where Allah addresses the Prophet (a.s.) or the people of the earlier times, he should feel that the communication is for his own benefit only. When he reads about the spread of victuals of the Heaven in the Quran, he should draw pleasure from the very thought of the

delicacies. He should visualise that his Friend has made the spread for him. Sometimes Allah recounts His most superior qualities of Beneficence and Sustenence in the Quran, and at other places He talks of the unfathomable treasures of knowledge.

Thus Allah recounts his innumerable Bounties to His creatures in the Book and shows them the way of happiness and pleasure. He promises them a place in the Heaven and also warns them of the Hellfire. The gathering for the recitation of the Quran is the most wonderful gathering. In this gathering Allah is the Host and the courtiers the Prophets and their Vicegerents (a.s.). How could one not be happy in such a gathering! Due respect for such a gathering is very important. One should therefore purify oneself with ablution (*Wadu)* is necessary.

ABOUT *ISTA-AAZA*
SEEKING ALLAH'S PROTECTION FROM THE SATAN

Before commencing the recitation of the Holy Quran one should do *Ista aaza* or seek the protection of Allah against the machination of the Satan. For this one should say *Aa-uzu billahi.* This has been mandated by the Quran..

There are two ways of doing the *Ista-aaza.* The first is saying, ' *Aa-uzu billahi min al shaitan ir rajeem'* and the second is '*Aa-uzu billahi samiul aleem min al shaitan ir rajeem'.* According to some other traditions, one should say '*Aa-uzu billahi min al shaitan ir rajeem in Allaha huwal fattahul aleem.'* But the first two methods of seeking Allah's Help to ward off the Satan are very much in vogue.

FACING THE KAABA OR QIBLA WHILE RECITING THE QURAN

It is advised to face the Kaaba while reciting the Quran, be it in loneliness or in congregation. One should not sit at the back of anyone while reciting the Quran.

ABOUT KHATME-QURAN OR FINISHING A RECITATION OF THE HOLY BOOK

One person told to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that he used to complete the recitation of the Quran in a single sitting in the night. (Abu Baseer).

The Imam (a.s.) said," It is better if you do one complete recitation of the Quran in one month. Quran should be recited with *tarteel* or slowly with proper pronunciation and punctuation. The reading should be such that the words are comprehensible to the reciter

and the listener. Whenever there is mention of the Heaven in the Quran, the reciter should seek Allah’s help for his deliverence. Similarly when the Hell is mentioned, he should seek deliverence..One should recite the Quran more during the Holy month of Ramadan.”.

Ali bin Mugheera asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), “ My father asked your ancestor, the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) about completing a recitation of the Quran in one night.. The Prophet said (a.s.), ‘ Yes! It can be done!’ “ Then Ibne Mugheera said,” My father used to complete forty recitations of the Quran or even more during the month of Ramandan.. I follow the same practice and on *Idd al Fitr* I complete one recitation to felcitate Holy Prophet (a.s.), one for Hazrat Ali (a.s.), one for Hazrat fatima Zehra (a.s.) and one each as tribute to each of the Holy Imams (a.s). This is my practice from the beginning and what Reward I could get for this? Will it be entered in the account of my deeds?”

The Imam (a.s.) said, “ Because of this practice Allah will treat you with these Infallible persons on the Day of Judgement!” Ibne Jaseem was astonished and said, “ Is there so much reward for an insignificant person like me?”

The Imam (a.s.) said thrice, “ *Balay, balay, balay* (Yes, yes, yes)!”

THE REWARD FOR LEARNING, TEACHING & MEMORISING THE QURAN

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said one whose memory is weak should learn the Quran with more practice. Allah will give him more reward. The Quran should be recited in a good tone but not with rhythm.
It is not good for a person to memorise the Quran and forget it. The verses that he had memorized, and forgotten, will salute the reciter in the Heaven from an elevated place by saying,’ *Salam alaik’*. The person would respond to the greeting and ask who they were and why they were greeting him from that distanceThey will reply that they were the verses of the Quran that he had memorised and didn’t care to retain in his memory. If he had tyaken care to retain the memory, he would have been in the higher echelons of the Heaven with them!

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said, “ A person who memorises the Quran and purposely forgets it will be raised on the Day of Judgement in a manner that his hands will be tied to his neck. For every verse that he had forgotte Allah would impose a snake on his body and he will be consigned to the Hell.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said that when Allah wants to send his curse and retribution to a people who have been sinning very much and finds that amongst the evil persons there are some people who offer prayers and some children are reciting the Quran, he puts away the Retribution.

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THE BENEFITS OF RECITING THE QURAN

.Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that Quran is a Commandment of Allah for His creatures. Therefore it is the bounden duty of every Muslim to study the Quran with deep thought.

- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that a house where the Quran is recited the angels would descend there and the Satan flees away from the precincts. The house where the Quran is recited appears like a star to the people of the Firmament.
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said, " A person who recites the Quran while standing will get reward equal to fifty good deeds. If a person seeks succor against his enemies from the Quran with true spirit, he will be safe from the adversaries. However strong the enemy might be!
- It is narrated by Bashir bin Ghalib that Imam Hussain (a.s.) said," When a person recites the verses of the Quran while standing, Allah will reward equivalent of ten good deeds for every word recited. If someone listens to the recitation with intent, he will get one good deed recorded in his account for every word that he listens to. If a person completes the recitation over-night in one sitting, in the morning the angels say his praises. If a person completes the recitation during a day, the angels praise him and one of his wishes that he makes after completing the recitation would be fulfilled. The Reward for completing the recitation of the Quran is better than the reward for any other good deeds." The narrator asked the Imam (a.s.), " Ya Hazrat! If a person has not learned to read the Quran, what should he do?" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Allah is Kind and Munificent! He should recite as much as he knows! He will certainly get the Reward!"
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says," When a person completes the recitation of the Quran in Mecca from one Friday to the other, or a similar period of time, he will be Rewarded amply by Allah."
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.), " A person who recites as few as ten verses in a night, he would not be counted amongst the negligent people. If he recites fifty verses, he will be counted as a *Dhakir* (a person who remembers). If one recites a hundred verses, he will be counted amongst the *Qaneteen* (the obedient). One who recites two hundred verses in a night, then he is amongst the *Qashe-een* ( ). If a person recites three hundred verses overnight, he one of the *Fayezeen* (the elevated). If a person recites five hundred verses in a night, he will be counted in a group of persons who prayed their whole lives. When a person recites a thousand verses in a night, he will get a *Qantar* of Reward. A *Qantar* is equal to fifteen thousand *Mishqal* (a *mishqal* is equal to 24 carat of gold) This will be equal to the *Mount Ohud.*
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " When a person recites any hundred verses of the Quran from any chapter, and after the recitation says thrice the words,' *Allah humma akshif anni bala',* all his calamities will be warded off."
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, " If one has pain in the chest, he must seek succor from the Quran. Allah has promised that the Quran cures the chest pain!"

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said, " Every place has a spring season. For the Quran the spring is the Holy Month of Ramadan!"
- It is narrated from Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) that if one listens to even a word of the Quran with interest, Allah will order writing one good deed in his record and obliterates one sin committed by him. The person will be elevated one stage upward. If a person memorises even one word from the Quran, Allah will record ten good deeds in his name and removes ten sins from his record. He will also be raised ten stages upward in his status.. When a person recites the verses of the Quran sitting at prayer, Allah will record fifty good deeds for him and remove fifty sins from his record. And raises his status fifty stages. When a person recites one verse standing in prayer, He will record hundred good deeds for him, remove a hundred sisn from his account and raise his status a hundred stages. .When a person completes a full recitation of the Quran, Allah will fulfill his wish for this life or the Hereafter."
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that when a person recites a hundred verses from anywhere in the Quran and then says *Ya Allah* seven times and order a stone to shatter, it will shatter with Allah's wish!

THE SUPERIORITY OF RECITING THE HOLY QURAN LOOKING AT ITS WORDS

The eyesight of a person will improve if he recites the Quran looking at it pages. Allah will reduce the punishment for the sins of this person's parents, even if the father or the mother was an infidel.

- The house where a copy of the Quran is kept the Satan cannot come.
- Authentic traditions indicate that three things would complain to Allah: 1. A mosque where people don't go to offer prayer. 2. A scholar who lives amongst ignorant people and none respects him. 3. A copy of the Quran that takes dust in a house and no one reads it.
- Someone asked the Prophet of Islam (a.s.)," I have memorised the Quran. Is it better to recite it from the memory or by looking at the Book?" " The Prophet (a.s.) replied , "t is better to recite looking at the pages of the Book because even looking at the book is auspicious." Then the Prophet (a.s.) said that there are six things that would be the cause of benefit to a person even after his death: 1. A pious son who prays for the deliverence of his parents after their death. 2. A copy of the Quran that will be read and recited by others after a person's death. 3. A well that has been dug for the benefit of the populace. 4. Creating a canal or a source of running water. 5. A tree that has been planted to give shade to the others. 6. The good examples set by the person for others to follow after his death.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said that looking at the face of Hazrat Ali ibne Abi Talib (a.s.) is equivalent to prayer. He also said that looking with affection on the faces of one's parents too is prayer. Looking at the Holy Quran is prayer and setting eyes on the Kaaba too is prayer.

THE BENEFITS OF CERTAIN VERSES OF THE HOLY QURAN

- Imam Reza (a.s.) said *Ism e Azam* (the ineffable word) is so close to *Bismillah* as the white of the eye is to it's black!
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said,“ To get rid of any ailment reciting *Al Fateha* seven times is sufficient. Even then if there is no relief, then recite the verse seventy times and I guarantee relief from the sickness!”
- Imam Hassan Askari (a.s.) said,” The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) says that Allah has divided the verse *Al Fateha* into two parts. One part for Himself and the other for His creatures. When a person says *Bismillahir Rehman ir Rahim,* Allah says, ’My creature has commenced with My Name! I shall complete all his works with felicity!’ When the person says ‘*Alhamdu lillahi Rab il Aalimeen', Allah says,'* My creature has expressed gratefulness for my Bounties.and therefore I have increased for him the Bounties in this world and the Hereafter!’ Now, when the person says, ‘*Ar Rehman ir Rahim'* Allah observes,’ My creature has borne witness to My being Most Beneficient and Merciful! I shall enhance My Rewards for him!’ When the person recites,’*Maalike youm id Deen'* Allah says, ‘O ye angels! You must bear witness that the person has accepted that I am the Arbiter of the Day of Judgement. Therefore I shall pardon all his sins on that fateful day!’ Now the person recites, ‘*Ayyaka naabudu',* Allah says,’ You have worshipped me and I shall Reward you for this act!’. The person then recites,’*Wayyaka nastaeen' when Allah responds,'I shall come to your rescue in all calamities and difficulties!”. The person now implores,' Ehdinus sirat al mustaqeem'* when Allah joins with,’ Whatever you have asked for I have Awarded to you and whatever fears you had I have removed them!’”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ For any pains and aches recite *Al Fateha* seventy times and the pain will vanish. If *Al Fateha* is recited seventy times over a dead body, there is no wonder if the dead comes back to life!”
- A person complained to the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) of acute headache. The Prophet (a.s.) said,’ “ Put your hand near the spot where you have the pain and then recite *Al fateha* and *Ayat al Kursi.* Thereafter recite the following: ‘ *Allaho Akbar Allaho Akbar la ilaha il Allaho wallaho Akbar ajallo wa Akbaro mimma akhafo wa ahzaro wa aoozubillahi min harrin naar'”*
- One person complained of fever. The Prophet (a.s.) said,” Open your collar, put your head in the garment and say the *Adhaan* and *Iqamat* and recite *Al Fateha* seven times.” The man did likewise and the fever left him.
- The Prophet (a.s.) also said that one who regularly recite the verses *Al Baqarah and Aal e Imran*, these verses will provide him shade out through the hot Day of Judgement!”
- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) has said,” The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has observed,’ Whoever recites the last three verses of the chapter *Al Baqarah* then he will not suffer any material losses, the Satan will never come near him and the person will never ignore the Holy Book!”

- Imam Reza (a.s.) said that when a person recites the *Ayat al Kursi* at bedtime he will never get afflicted with paralysis. If he recites this verse after mandatory prayers, he will never suffer from the bite of poisonous insects.
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said that if a person recites the *Ayat al Kursi* once, Allah will remove a thousand calamities from him.
- It is narrated that Abu Dharr Ghiffari asked the Prophet (a.s.)," Which is the greatest verse of the Holy Quran?" The Prophet (a.s.) said, " The *Ayat al Kursi!"*
- Someone complained of a fever to Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). The Imam asked him to write the *Ayat al Kursi* on a plate, wash it with water into a tumbler and drink it."
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) narrates that amongst his ancestors heard a person reciting *Al Fateha* and told him," He has thanked Allah and has been pardoned!" Then he heard the man recite *Qul huwallahu Ahad* and said," The person has faith in the Unity of Allah and has become fearless!" When the person recited *Inna Anzalna,* the Imam (a.s.) said, " The person has borne witness to the Prophethood of Mohammed (S.A) and he has been pardoned by Allah". When the man recited *Ayat al Kursi* the Imam (a.s.) said," *Subhan Allah!* The person has escaped from the Hell!"
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said that if one has any ailment of the eye, he should recite *Ayat al Kursi* with full faith and he will be cured of the disease. If a person recites *Ayat al Kursi, Qul hu wallah, Inna anzalna* eleven times each at dawn, his properties will remain safe. .When a person leaves his home for some errand, he should recite *Ayat al Kursi, Inna anzalna and Al fateha* before starting on his journey. The person will be successful in his errand.
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said," Whoever recites *Ayat al Kursi* a hundred times will get reward equal to his prayers offered over a lifetime."
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said," If a Muslim knows the benefits of reciting *Ayat al Kursi* then he will never forget to regularly recite this versae."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," When Allah had revealed *Ayat al Kursi, Al Fateha, Shahed Allaho annahu, la ilaha, Qul Allahumma Malikalmulk* then these verses clung to the Firmament and said," O Allah! Where are you revealing us? These people are sinners?" Allah ordered them to go to the earth and observed," By My Might! Whoevr amongst the Progeny of Mohammed (a.s.) and their Shias recite you, I shall secretly shower My Blessings on them. I shall fulfill seventy wishes of the person every day. I shall accept their penitence despite their having committed many sins!"
- Ashjah Salma told to Imam Jafare Sadiq (a.s.), " I have to pass several times through fearsome wilderness. Teach me a prayer that I negotiate these places safely." The Imam (a.s.) said, " Keep your hand on the head and recite the *Ayat al Kursi*"

THE BENEFITS OF OTHER VERSES OF THE HOLY QURAN

SURAT AN NISA

Hazrat ameer al Momineen (a.s.) said that one who recites this verse on Friday will be safe from pressures (*Fishar)* of the grave.

SURAT AL MAIDA

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said," One who recites this verse on Thursdays will never become a hypocrite.

SURAT AL INAAM

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said," If a person suffers from a serious disease, he will get relief by reciting this verse.

SURAT AL AARAF

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has narrated that a person who recites this verse will be amongst the friends of Allah.If one recites this verse on Friday, he will be exempted from the accounting of deeds on the Day of Judgement.

- Asbag bin Nabata narrates that Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) said," By the Great Allah who sent Hazrat Mohammed as the true Prophet (a.s.) and endowed his *Ahl al Bayt* with august status, that people used to search for amulets and tablets, to save themselves from drowning, fire, theft and to guard their slaves and animals going astray. All these safety measures are there in the Holy Quran.Whoever wants help can ask me. One person stood up and asked," Ya Ameer al Momineen (a.s.)! Please do instruct me with thos verses of the Quran." The Imam (a.s.) recited two verses, " *Inna wali Allahul lazi nazzalal kitaba wa huwa yatawallis saleheen—7.196 "wama qadaru walla haqqa qadrehi walarzo jamian qabzatuhu yaum al qiyamate was-samawato mutawwiyatum beyameenehi subhanahu wa ta-aala amma yushrekoon"—39.67* The man recited these verses and he escaped unhurt from a ferocious fire that had burnt down many houses in his neighborhood.

- Another person got up and asked Hazrat Ali (a.s.), " Ya Hazrat! I have a flock of animals. Some of them have the tendency to flee" The Imam (a.s.) said, " Recite this verse in the ear of the animals that have tendency to run away from the flock: " *Wa lahu aslama mun fis-samawate walarze tauan wa karhan wa ilaihi yurjaoon—3.83* The person followed the Imam (a.s.)'s instruction and the animals remained docilely in the flock.
- One more person got up and asked, " Ya Hazrat! The place where I dwell there are plenty of wild animals. They enter my barn and harm my domestic animals. The Imam (a.s.) said, " Keep reciting the following two verses: " *laqad ja-akum rasoolum min anfusakum azeezun alaihi ma anittum harisun alaikum bilmomineena wa raoofun raheem" Fain tawallau afqul hasbillaho la ilaha illa huwa alaihi tawakkalto wa huwa rabbul arshil azeem."* When the man started reciting the verses regularly, the wild animals kept away from his place.
- Another person rose and said, " Ya Hazrat! I suffer from excessive biliousness which is troubling me much. Kindly teach me a verse that I get rid of the ailment." Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " O person! Hear carefully! You will spend neither a Dirham nor a Deenar for this treatment! Write *Ayat al Kursi* on your tummy wash it down. Also write the *Ayat al Kursi* on a plate, wash it with water and drink it. Allah will give you cure.
- Another person asked, " Ya Hazrat! My slave has run away. What can I do to bring him back?" Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said, " Recite this verse" *Au kazulumatin fi bahrin tujjin yaghshaho maujum min fauqehi sahabun zulamatum baazuha fauqa baazin iza akhraja yadahu lum yakadu yaraha wa man lum yajal illaho lahu nooran fama lahu min noor—24.40"* When the man started reciting the verse, the slave returned home by himself.
- Another person asked, " Ya Hazrat! Kindly instruct me with a verse to guard against thieves and burglars." The Imam (a.s.) said, " When you go to bed, recite the following two verses. Your property will be safe: ' *Qul adu allaha au adu ar rahmana.....til the end of the verse—Bani israel verse 110-111"*
- Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said," if a person is in a wilderness in the night, he should recite the *Ayat Sakhra* and angels will guard him and the satans dare not come near him. The ayat is," *Inna rabbakum ullahul lazi khalaq al samawate walarza ..... tabarak allaho rab al aalameen—Al aaraaf verse 54"* One person, who had heard this, happened to stay in a wilderness in the night. He did not remember the verse. Two satans cam to him.. One shut his mouth to stop him from reciting the verse and the other said, ' Don't gag his mouth! Give him some time!' The man suddenly remembered the verse and recited it. The angels immediately appeared and stood in guard around him and stayed with him till the morning. The man went to Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) and said, "Ya Hazrat! I found your instruction right !" He recounted his experience of the night. He said, " I went to the place after the sunrise and found the footmarks of the Satans who dragged away from there."
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) said that those who are exposed to the dangers of drowining in the high seas, should recite the following verses to have safe voyages: " *Bismillahi mujraha wa mursaha inna rabbi laghafoorun raheem. Bismillahil malikil haqqil mubeen. Wa ma qadarullaha haqqa qarehi wal arzo jameean*

qabuzatu yaumal qiyamati was samawato mutawwiyatunm beyameenehi subhanahu wa ta-ala amma yushrekoon."

SURA BANI ISRAEL

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that a person who recites this verse every Friday night will not die till he sets his eyes on the *Saheb al Asr* (The Twelfth Imam). This person will also have the status of the companions of the Prophet of Islam (a.s.).

- It is narrated that Omer bin Hanzala came to the presence of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) and complained of a headache. The Imam (a.s.) said," Put your hand at the spot you feel the pain and recite the following verse," *Qul lau kana mahu aalehatun kama yaquloona izan all abtaghau ila zilarshe sabeela—17.42 " Wa iza qeela lahum ta-aa lau ila ma anzalallaha wa ilal rasoole rayatal munafeqeena yasuddoona anka sudooda—4.61"*

SURA HOOD

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said," Whoever recites this verse on every Friday, he will be raised on the day of Resurrection along with the prophets (a.s.)."

SURA YUSUF

One who recites this verse regularly everyday, his face will be bright on the Day of Judgement like the face of the Prophet of Islam (a.s.).

SURA RAAD

The one who recites this verse will be safe from the strike of lightning.

SURA IBRAHIM & SURA HAJR

One who recites these verses on Fridays with a prayer of two genuflections will never be penurous.

SURA NAHL

One who recites this verse will never be indebted.

SURA KAHF

One who recites this verse on Fridays will have the status of a martyr when he dies.

SURA E HAJ

One who recites this verse once in every three days , he will perform Haj the same year.

SURA ANKABOOT & ALROME

One who recites these verses on 14th of Ramadan will go to Heaven.

SURA YASEEN

This verse is the heart of the Quran. Reciting this verse enhances livelihood and wards away evils. Someone asked Imam Reza (a.s.) a cure for piles. The Imam asked him to write Sura Yasin on parchment with honey, wash it and drink the fluid. .When a person has leukoderma the same process of treatment should be followed.

One person asked Ameeral Momineen (a.s.) to give him a prayer for recovering lost valuables. The Imam (a.s.) asked him to offer two *rakaat* of prayer and in every *raka* recite sura Yasin.. Then he should say,'*ya hadi alzallat rad ala zaallati.'*.

Hazrat Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates that a person who recited the sura Yasin once in his lifetime, Allah will enter good deeds in his record equal to the numbers of the creatures in the entire universe. Allah will also pardon two thousand sins of the person. He will be safe from penury, indebtedness and disease. The death qualms and the pressure of the grave will be light for him. He will prosper in the world and get rewards in the Hereafter. Allah will reward him so much that He will announce to the angels to keep praying for the person's deliverance.

The Imam (a.s.) also said that a person who has marks of leukoderma on his face should write Sura Yasin with honey, dissolve in water and drink..

SURA E SAFFAAT

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " Whoever recites this verse on Fridays will be safe from all sorts of calamities. His livelihood will increase. No harm will come to his life, property and the family. No cruel ruler or Satan would trouble him. He will enter the Heaven with the martyrs.

Hazrat Ameer al Mimineen (a.s.) narrates that when a person has the fear of getting stung by a scorpian or snake should recite this verse. .One who desires to have plenty of Reward on the Day of Judgement, should recite the following after every prayer:
" *Subhana rabbaka rabbil izzate amma yasefoona wa salamun alal muslemeena wal hamdu lillahi rab il aalameen—*

If any person recites this verse while getting up from sitting posture everytime, whatever sin he committed while sitting will be pardoned.

SURA E SAAD

A person who recites this verse on the eve of Friday Allah will bestow on him so much reward in this world and the Hereafter that He Has not given to any mortal other than the Prophets (a.s.). The kin of the person, and even his slaves and servants, will enter Heaven on his intercession.

SURA HAA MEEM SAJDA

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," Any person who recites this verse, Allah will provide him a light on the Day of Judgement that there will be illumination to the extent his eyes could see. Allah will bless him with contentment and happiness. Looking at the person, others would express their desire to be like him."

SURA HAA MEEM AIN SEEN QAAF

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that a person who regularly recites this verse will rise from his grave on the Day of Resurrection with a face as white as snow and would shine like the sun. While he will stand in front of Allah's Firmament, Allah would say'O My creature! You always recited this verse! If you were aware of the Reward for reciting it, you would never have tired of doing it!' Now, know the Reward for doing it. The angels will be ordered to take the person to the Heaven. He will be guided to the palace speciaally erected for him. The walls of the palace would be made of red rubies. The parapets would be of green emeralds. It will be delicately constructed that everything outside the palace will be visible through the walls from inside. In the palace there will be virgin houris, young women and a thousand slaves and slave girls to attend on him. "

SURA E ZHAQRAF

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says," Whoever recites this verse regularly Allah will prevent him from the vermin in the grave and he will remain safe from the pressure of the grave. This verse will intercede on behalf of the person on the Day of Judgement.and lead him to the Heaven."

SURA E MOHAMMED

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, " Whoever recites this verse will be safe from commitment of sins. He will not carry any doubts about the Faith. He will not be afflicted with penury. He will be free of the fear of the rulers. Allah will appoint a thousand angels to pray for him at his graveside after his death. . Thousand angels will be beside him when he is raised from the grave on the Day of Resurrection. These angels will protect him from the hardships of that eventful Day. The person will be in the trust of Allah and His Prophet ((a.s.)!"

SURA E REHMAN

This verse has much felicity. The person who recites it will have a face as bright as the moon. It is advised that whenever one recites *fabe ayye aalaye Rabbekuma tukazzebaan* he should say *la beshaiyun min alaayeke Rabbe akzib.*

SURA E JINN

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said," A person who recites this verse regularly, will be safe from any harm from the jinns and magicians in this world. He will be amongst the companions of the Prophet (a.s.) in the Heaven."

SURAT AL WAQIA

One who recites this verse every night, Allah will befriend him. The person will never suffer from poverty or hunger.

SURA INNA ANZALNA

A person who recites this verse will get the satatus of a martyr. If one recites it during prayers, all his sins will be padoned. If a person recites this verse continuously during Ramadan and a thousand times on the eve of 23^{rd} Ramadan, he will witness such wonders on the morning of the 23^{rd} that he will get amazed! His belief and Faith would become firmer!"

Whenever Imam Reza (a.s.) wore a new dress he would recite *sura inna anzalna, sura Qul huwalla, sura qul ya ayyuhal kaferoon* ten times each, blow on a small quantity of water from his mouth and sprinkle it on his new clothes. The Imam (a.s.) used to say that whoever does this will be given good sustenence by Allah till a thread of the dress remained with him."

Someone asked Imam Jafare Sadiq (a.s.) , " Ya Maula! I have married a few women, but still I am issue-less!". The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Before copulation you must recite *Sura Inna anzalna* seven times in a manner that your right hand is near the umbilicus of your wife Till the pregnancy becomes evident, keep placing your hand near the umbilicus of your wife and recite the verse every night." When the person adopted this practice, his wife became pregnant and he was blessed with seven sons thereafter.

The Imam (a.s.) also said, " One who recites the verse *Inna anzalna* in the prayers instead of *Qul hawalla,* there will be doubt about the acceptance of his prayers. Even if it is accepted, there may not be any Reward for such a prayer."

SURA ZALZAAL

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ A person recites this verse in optional prayers, Allah will save him from earth-quakes, lightning strikes and other calamities. At the time of his death an angel will recommend to the *Malak al Maut* (the angel of death) to make his death easy. The person would see his place in the Heaven before his death. All the curtains would be raised from in front of him and his spirit would be taken away peacefully.

It is narrated from Imam Reza (a.s.) that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, “ A person who recites the *Surat al Zalzaal* four times, it would be like reciting the complete Book.”

SURAT AL QAREAA

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said,” Whoever recites this verse regularly, will be rendered safe by Allah from the tortures of Dajjal. He will be spared the Hellfire in the Hereafter.

SURAT AL TAKASUR

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says , “ One who recites this verse will be given the rewards equal to that for a hundred martyrs. Whoever recites it in the optional prayers, rewards equal to that of fifty martyrs will be entered into his account. Such a person will be having forty rows of angels praying the mandatory prayers standing behind him.

SURAT AL ASR

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said,” If a person recites this verse in his optional prayers, Allah will raise him on the Day of Judgement with a radiant face, smiling teeth and bright eyes. He will be sent to the Heaven.”

SURA E KAUTHAR

A person who recites this surat during his mandatory and optional prayers, Allah will quench his thirst at the Cistern of Kauthar and will give him a place in the vicinity of the Prophet of Allah (a.s.).

SURA IZA JA-AA NASR ALLAH

Reciting this verse in the prayers protects one from the machinations of his enemies.

SURAT AL IQLAS

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that if a person recites this verse once, Allah will shower Blessings on him. When the person recites it twice, Allah will Bless his children. If the person recites the verse thrice, Allah will also Bless the person's friends. Thus, the more a person recites this verse, the more he shall be Blessed by Allah. For reciting the verse a thousand times, the person will get the august status of a martyr.
While the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) was offering the funeral prayer of Saad bin Ma-aaz, he noticed that seventy thousand angels were present at the prayer. He asked Jibraeel the reason for this honor to the dead person. Jibraeel replied that he used to recite *Sura e Iqlas* frequently.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " If you desire Allah's protection from your enemies, recite *Sura e Iqlas* on your six sides, that is, right, left, up, down , front and back."
- And when you go to confront a superior, recite this verse thrice in front of the person and at every recitation close one finger of you left hand. With Allah's help you will come out successful!"
- Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " If a person has not recited the *Surat al Iqlas* for one week, his Reckoning will be along with the accursed abu Lahab"
- The Imam (a.s.) further said, " If one is suffering from an ailment, and doesn't take help from this verse, then he is a denizen of the Hell.
- Also said, " If your believe in Allah and the Day of Judgement, then after the mandatory prayers don't forget to recite *Sura e Iqlas. Allah will pardon the sins of your forbears and your offspring.*
- Hazrat Ali (a.s.) has said, " A person who recites the *Sura e Iqlas* eleven times after the mandatory morning prayer, the Satan cannot make him commit a sin even if he tempts the person a hundred thousand times."
- Also Ameer al Momineen (a..s.) said," When a person recites the verse in the night, Allah will depute fifty thousand angels to keep vigil the whole night."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) has said, " When a person reads *Sura e Iqlas* it is like reading a third of the Quran, a third of Torah , Injeel and Zaboor."
- Also the Imam (a.s.) said, " Allah has subjugated fever to Hazrat Fatima Zehra (a.s.) in lieu of the *Garden of Fadak.* Therefore if a friend of the *Ahl al Bayt* recites *Sura e Iqlas* a thousand times and blows over a person suffering from high fever, the person will recover with Allah's Help."
- Imam Reza (a.s.) has said, " If one sits near a sick person, recites *Surat al Fateha, Al Iqlas, Qul Aooz berabinnaas, Qul Aoozo berabbil falaq* and touches the face of the ailing person, *Insha Allah,* the sickness will vannish."

SURAT AL KAAFEROON

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, “ When a person recites *Surat al Kaaferoon and Iqlas* during the mandatory prayers, Allah will pardon his parents and siblings. If he is a callous(*Shaqi*) person, Allah will remove his name from the roster of such persons and put him on the list of the virtuous. Allah will give him felicity in the worldly affairs, he will die the death of a martyr and will be raised a martyr on the Day of Reckoning.”

SURAT AL MAUZATEEN

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) say, “ There are two verses, *an Naas and Falaq,* that when they were revealed, the Prophet (a.s.) was having fever and this verse was used as an amulet for him and he recovered..

SURAT AD DAHR

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said, “ Whoever recites this verse on the morning of Thursdays, Allah will grant to him in the Heaven a group of eight hundred virgins and four thousand houris. The person will be in the company of the Prophet (a.s.).”

Imam Reza (a.s.) has said that it is a fact that there will be effect of bad eyes. A person can set a bad eye even on himself. Therefore to prevent against the effect of bad eyes one should recite thrice the following:

“ Maasha Allaho la quwatta illa billa alali al azeem”

When one has the fear of bad eye affecting him, he should recite the verse *Mauzatain* while going out..

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THE THIRD STREAM

ABOUT DEALING WITH THE KINGS

It is said about the justice and tyranny of kings that the welfare of the subjects of a kingdom depends much upon the fairness of its ruler. Therefore, The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " My *Ummat* depends for its prosperity on two types of persons: the first the *Fuqha* (the jurists) and the second, the nobles."

Also the Prophet (a.s.) said," On the Day of Reckoning the Hell will address three categories of people:

1. The *Umra* (the nobles)
2. 2. The *Quraa* (the reciters) and
3. 3. The *Aghnia* (the rich).

It will tell to the *Umra* that Allah had given them the authority and you abused it for perpetrating tyranny on the hapless people. Now you have to pay for your deeds.

The Hell will tell the *Quraa* that to make a show of their prowess and to acquire false fame they were reciting the Quran and involved themselves in disobedience of Allah. Now they would have to taste the Hellfire.

The Hell will address the *Aghnia* that Allah had blessed them with wealth and they didn't spend it in any way to please Allah. How will they now bear the retribution..

Hazrat Amir al Momineen (a.s.) said that obedience of a tyrannical and cruel ruler is a major sin. Obeying the *aulu al amr* who are the Infallible Imams is the bounden duty of the believers. Disobedience of these Imams is a major sin. These Imams are Infallible and Allah is Just that He doesn't Ordain obedience of fallible rulers.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) also said, " Allah will send His Retribution to six types of persons for their foul traits:

1. On the Arabs for their bigotry.
2. The rich for their pride and conceit.
3. On the nobles and kings for their tyranny. .
4. On the jurists and scholars for their jealousies.
5. On the traders for their unfair business practices.
6. On the rustics for their ignorance..

- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that there is a mill in the Hell that rotates perpetually. People asked him, "Ya Hazrat! What does this mill grind?" The

Prophet (a.s.) replied," It will grind the sinful scholar (*Ulema*), sinning reciters, tyrannical kings, untrustworthy viziers and dissimulating courtiers.

- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, " I curse seven types of persons. All the prophets (a.s.) who came prior to me have also disapproved of such persons. These persons are:

1. One who adds or removes anything from the Book of Allah.
2. One who denies the Divine Decree (*Qaza wa Qadr)* and doesn't believe in the fate Decreed by Allah.
3. One who acts against my *Sunnat* and creates hypocricy (*Bidaat*) in Religion.
4. One who usurps the rights of my *Ahl al Bayt* . Allah has termed such usurpation *Haram.*
5. One who imposes himself forcibly on the people and gives honor to those who have been disgraced by Allah and disgraces those who have been honored by Allah.
6. One who imposes himself on the material assets of the Muslims and considers himself the sole owner of everything.
7. One who decrees haram that which has been termed Halal by Allah.

- It is authentically narrated from Imam Reza (a.s.), " When the persons at the helm of affairs start lying and give partial and unjust decisions, then it stops raining from the skies. When the kings are tyrannical and unjust, their realms become weak. When people stop paying *Zakat, the cattle start dying!"*

BEHAVIOR OF PEOPLE IN POWER

- It is narrated that Ziyad Qandi came to the presence of Imam Jafare Sadiq (a.s.). The Imam (a.s.) asked him," O ziyad! Are you the chief appointed by those tyrannical caliphs?" Ziyad replied, " O son of the Prophet (a.s.)! No doubt I am the chief. But I am considerate! I am not one of those who hoard riches. Whatever I get, I share with the deserving *momins.* I treat them equitably!"

- The Imam (a.s.) said, " If you do this, then it is very good. Remember! When your conscience takes you towards unjust acts, and you have control over the conscience, then remember Allah's Rights. One who wreaks tyranny on people, Allah will wreak Retribution on him! When other people give you trouble, the trouble passes by! But when you unjustly terrorise others, the punishment will await for you!"
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that when Allah gives a kingdom to someone, he fixes the days, nights, months and years for which the realm would last. If the ruler is just, Allah orders the angel incharge of keeping the time for the epoch of the king to prolong it. Then the days, nights, months and years of the realm are revised upwards. When a king is unjust and cruel to his subjects, then Allah orders the angel to shorten his realm.

- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) told to Naufil Bakali, “ O Naufil! Listen and act on my advice! Never accept chieftaincy, commission for collecting taxes and the position of a proclaimer (*Naqeeb). “*
- One person came to Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) and said,” Ya Hazrat! I have been the chief over the people from the times of Hajjaj till now. Will my repentence be accepted by Allah?” The Imam (a.s.) kept quiet and did not reply. The man repeated his question. Now the Imam (a.s.) replied, “ Your penitence will not be acceptable till you restore the right of every person you have wronged!”
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that one had been unjust to someone and wishes to make amends, but the person is not traceable. .In this event the repentent person should pray for the Deliverance of the wronged person and this way his sin might be pardoned.”
- The Prophet (a.s.) then added, “ The first to enter the Hell will be the chief who was unjust. The second person will be the rich man who did not distribute Allah’s Right from his wealth. The third person will be the beggar who was proud of his penury.”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) told to one chieftain, “ Abstain from tyranny and injkustice! The suppreed overcomes the pangs of tyranny, but the tyrant faces Retribution for the tyranny for ever.”
- The Imam (a.s.) further added, “ On the Day of Judgement three persons will be the dearest to Allah:

1. One who is not unjust to a persaon even in a state of acute anger..
2. One who is an arbiter in some matter and doesn’t take sides unjustly.
3. One who tells the truth even at the risk of harm to his own person..

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said, “ One must be scared of doing an injustice to a person who has no helper in the world except Allah.”
- The Imam (a.s.) further added,” The cruel person doesn’t usurp as much value by usurping anything from the weakling than what the weak person takes away from the tyrants faith!”
- “ And when a person does wrong to anyone, he infact wrongs himself because, as you sow, so shall you reap!”

THE RIGHTS OF THE RULERS AND THE RULED OVER EACH OTHER

Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) says that since Allah has given authority to the kings and the emirs, it is imperative for them to be just and sagacious with their subjects. They should show affection for the subjects like the parents do for their children. They should be thankful to Allah for the position bestowed on them. In this regard the long epistles written to Malik e Ashtar, Sahl bin Haneef and Mohammed bin Abi Bakr are worth perusal.

- It is authentically reported that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " A fair person in authority over the affairs of Muslims deals with them justly. He keeps his doors always open for them, erects no curtain or obstruction between them and himself.. He considers their affairs with keen interest and fulfills their legitimate needs. Allah will remove all his fears and give him admittance to the Heaven on the Day of Judgement."
- Remember, Allah has made every individual a sort of a king in his own way. It is in place to quote the following tradition here:

"Kalamun raain wa kalamun masoolan an raaiyyatahi"
"Everyone of you is a ruler and you will have to account for your subjects"

- Questions will be asked and enquiries made. Like enquiries are made with a shepherd about his flock.
- On the Day of Judgement everyone will be asked about how he treated his subjects. As Allah has given authority to kings over the subjects of his realm, the courties and nobles have authority over smaller numbers than the king, every house-holder has authority over his family, servants and slaves..The house-holder is responsible for the maintenance of the persons under his authority. Similarly every individual is the master over his own limbs and body. He has to keep his senses in control that they don't become the cause of Retribution for him on the Day of Reckoning.. Allah has mad the behaviour and habits subordinate to the individual. There is none in this world who is not a ruler in lesser or greater measure. Every person is bestowed with the power to rule according to his ability. Allah expects him to be thankful and perform his task according to the Dictum of the Creator.If the person does his task properly, Allah will enhance his authority and bounty for him .One who goes in the contrary direction, Allah will withdraw the bounty from him..If the rulers are just to the subjects and express their thanks to Allah along with the subjects, Allah will extend the period of their dominance. Therefore he has said that even if the king is an infidel, but he deals with the subjects judiciously, his realm will prosper. To the contrary the realm of a cruel Muslim king disintegrates.

ABOUT HELPING MOMINEEN AND KEEPING THEM CONTENTED

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that making a *momin* smile is a big virtue. There is no supplication more than making a *momin* happy and helping him to meet his needs.

It is in the traditions that Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) received a revelation from Allah, " O Moosa! I have made the Heaven lawful for some of my creatures." Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) asked, " Who are these persons?" Allah replied, " These are the persons who make their fellowmen happy!"

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said that a *momin* tired of the repression of the Muslim king flew to another realm of an infidel and took refuge there. The kind ruler there treated the *momin properly and provided him all the necessary facilities. In the*

meantime the infidel king died. Allah revealed to him that but for his being an unbeliever He would have sent him to the Heaven. However the fire of the Hell was made cold for him.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that one who pleases a *momin,* it is like pleasing the Prophet of Islam (a.s.). One who has pleased the Prophet (a.s.), he has pleased Allah.. And a person who pleases Allah, qualifies to enter the Heaven..
- It is narrated from Sadeer Sarraf that once he was with Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). At that meeting a discussion came up about the rights of brother *momins.* The Imam (a.s.) gave his attention to me and asked , " If you wish I shall tell you about the rights?" Sadeer said, " Ya Hazrat! Kindly tell!" The Imam (a.s.) said, " When Allah orders the death of a person, the *Karamain Katibain (* the two angels who keep an account of the deeds of the person) go to the Firmament and tell to Allah,' O Allah! This was your pious creature! He was always busy in your obedience and always abstained from anything that can be termed your disobedience! Now you have taken away his spirit. What is your order to us in his regard?' Allah will say,'You return to the world and sit praying near his grave.and enter the reward for your prayers in his account till I raise him on the Day of Resurrection!' The Imam (a.s.) added, " O Sadeer! Do you want to hear further of the virtues of a *momin?*" He said," Ya Hazrat! Kindly relate!" The Imam (a.s.) said, " At the time of raising the person from the grave, a pleasant looking apparition will emerge from the grave and go in front of him. When the person would get scared on seeing the manifestations of the Doomsday, this apparition would put his fears to rest. It will give him the tiding of the happiness and comforts in store for him and that he need not worry for anything. It will remain with the person up to the place where he will have to give the account of his deeds. Allah will ease the process of accounting for the man. And will order his conduct to the Heaven. At that time the apparition will move in front of him. The *momin* will tell to the apparition,' May Allah be kind on you! You have kept company with me ever since I emerged from the grave and have been the harbinger of good news at every step. You are now leading me to the Heaven! Tell me, who you are?' The apparition would reply, ' I am that happiness and comfort which you gave to such-and-such a *momin.* Allah has created me on account of that happiness only that I keep giving you tidings of happiness coming your way!'
- Mashal narrates that one year he went for the Haj. After the Haj he went to the presence of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.).. The Imam (a.s.) inquired of him, " From where are you coming?" He said, " After performing the Haj." The Imam (a.s.) asked, " Do you know that the felicity of performing the Haj for a person is that in his account of deeds, six thousand good deeds are recorded. Allah also pardons six thousand bad deeds of the person!" Masaal said, " Subhan Allah! There is so much reward for a Haji!" The Imam (a.s.) said, " I shall tell you of an act that brings much more reward. The *momin* who helps a brother *momin* or makes him happy, gets reward equal to performing Haj ten times."

THE FELICITY OF COMING TO THE HELP OF MOMINS

- It is narrated from Mufazzal bin Omer that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " O Mufazzil! Listen to what I say and act on the advice! Inform your pious *momin* brothers too of what I am saying." Mufazzil asked, " Ya Hazrat! I offer myself in sacrifice for you! Who are the people who take pleasure in helping their brother *momins?" The Imam (a.s.) replied, "* When a person helps fulfill one need of a *momin,* Allah will fulfill his hundred thousand needs in the Hereafter. One of his wishes will be taking his next of kin, friends and relations to the Heaven. The only condition required of him will be that the persons on whose behalf he intercedes have not been hypocrites (*Nasibi).*"
- It is narrated in another tradition that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) told to Mufazzil," O Mufazzil! Allah has selected one group from His creatures who attend to the needs of our poor Shias. In return for this Allah will award Heaven to them. Therefore, to the best of your ability help them.and become a part of the chosen group!"
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) when a *momin* approaches him for help, and he thinks that the person coming to him is a matter of felicity, and helps him suitably, it will be the cause of our friendship for him. Our friendship is Allah's friendship. And if he turns down the request of the *momin* for help, despite having the means to do it, Allah will put a fiery snake in his grave. This snake will trouble him till the Day of Judgement. .Later on, it will be Allah's decision either to punish him or reward him. "
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that in his view helping meet the needs of a *momin* is better than performing twenty Haj pilgrimages when on each pilgrimage one has spent a hundred thousand Dirhams."
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said, " If a *momin* finds another in trouble, desires to help him, but is not in a position to come to his aid, Allah will award Heaven to such a person.
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) said that if a person himself takes the trouble of going to help a brother *momin,* then seventy five thousand angels would provide the shadow of their wings over his head and for every step that he takes for this purpose, Allah will add one good to the account of his deeds and pardons all his sins. Allah will also raise the person's status by a degree. When the person returns after performing the good deed, the reward for performing a Haj and Umra is entered in his record.
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " When a person doesn't come to the aid of a *momin, despite having the means of doing it, then Allah will demean him in this world and the hereafter.*
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, " There are four types of persons on whom Allah will Bestow Blessing on the Day of Reckoning:

1. One from whom someone bought something, but returned it and the person has willingly accepted back his merchandise.
2. One who comes to the rescue of a person in trouble.
3. One who frees a slave..
4. One who extends a helping hand for the marriage of a poor person..

- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) has said," A person who removes the danger of fire, flood or the enemy from Muslims, Allah will pardon all his sins"

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says, “ One person was brought back to life from the grave by angels and told him ,’ We shall inflict on you a thousand blows of the whip of Allah’s Punishment!’ The person said, ‘ I don’t have the strength to bear so much flogging.’ The angels said, ‘ All right! We shall reduce one blow!’ He said, ‘ I don’t have the strength to bear this severe punishment.’ In this way the angels kept reducing the number of blows they wanted to give the person and he kept on peading that he didn’t have sufficient strength to bear the flogging. In the end the angels said, ‘ Atleast, we shall flog you once!’ the man asked, ‘ You have not told me for what fault of mine you want to punish me?’ The angels said,’ Once you had prayed without doing the mandatory ablution and on another occasion you passed by an old man who needed help, but you didn’t help him.’ Saying this the angels flogged him once, The blow was so intense that a small fire started in the grave.”
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) that whosoever denies to fulfill the need of a needy person, despite having the means to help him, his sin will be like the sin of *Ashari.* Someone asked,’Who is *Ashari* ?’ The Prophet said, “ A sinner who is cursed by Allah, the angels and all the creatures every day and night. One who is accursed of Allah , can be helped by none.”
- Also the Prophet (a.s.) said, “ One who hides one fault of a *momin,* Allah will overlook his seventy faults in the Hereafter.”
- The Prophet (a.s.) said that Allah will not Reward one who embezelled. Someone asked, ‘ Who is an embezeller?’ The Prophet (a.s.) said, “ He is one who is miserly in helping a brother *momin.”*

CENSURING, BELITTLING OR HARMING THE MOMINS

It is narrated from Imam Reza (a.s.) that there were four pious persons (*momins*) during the period of the bani Israel. Three of them were one day having a tete a tete when the fourth knocked at the door. The slave of the house came out. The *momin* asked him if his lord was at home. When the slave replied in the negative, the *momin* went away. The master asked the slave of the identity of the caller. The slave replied that it was so-and-so and that he had told him that the master wasn’t home. The master and the other two *momins* did not object to the slave’s act. The next day the *momin* visited the place when the three of them were emerging from the house. He greeted them and said that he visited the place the previous day too. The three of them laughed and didn’t even express regrets for not being able to meet him. They then proceeded towards their farm. On the

way a cloud hovered over the heads of the three persons. The angel Jibraeel called,' O lightening of the cloud! Fall on the heads of the three persons and render them to ashes!' Lightening emerged from the cloud and burnt them to ashes.

The fourth *momin* expressed deep sorrow and anguish for the tragedy that had befallen their friends. He went to the prophet (a.s.) of those times, Hazrat Yusha (a.s) and narrated the happening to him. He said that 'Allah dislikes one *momin* belittling and making a laughing stock of another. Your three friends did that to you. You visited them the frst day, they were at home and their slave had lied to you that they were not at home. They silently approved of what the slave did. On your second visit they didn't express any regret for the inconvenience caused to you. To the contrary, they belittled by laughing at you! You were not aware of their intentions, but Allah knows everything and He didn't like their behavior. They have been punished for their misbehavior!'

The *momin* said, ' O prophet of Allah! I have pardoned my friends!' Hazrat Yusha (a.s) replied,' There is scope for pardon only before the arrival of Allah's Retribution! But there is no possibility of pardon after the Retribution has visited the sinners! It is possible that your friends may not be asked to account for this misdeed of theirs.'

FRIGHTENING A MOMIN

- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that if a person views a *momin* with a threatening look, Allah will frighten this person on the Day when there will be no succor other than Allah's Mercy for anyone! The Imam (a.s.) also said that if a Muslim visits another person who neither admits him into his premises nor he comes out to meet him, then he will be under the Displeasure of Allah till he meets the visitor.
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that a person who frightens a *momin* with his status and clout, and thinks of harming him, will earn a place for himself in the Hell.. Moreover, if he causes physical harm to the *momin,* then he will be in the company of Pharoah and his progeny in the Hell.
- In another narration it is mentioned that when a person utters a single word to harm a *momin* and takes sides with the tyrant, he will have written on his forehead the following words on the Day of Judgement,' This person is hopeless of My (Allah's) Forgiveness.'
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that there is a mountain in the middle of the Hell called *Sa-ada*. Along this mountain there is the valley of *Saqr.* There is a well in the valley by the name of *Habhab.* Whenever the curtain is raised from this well, the denizens of the Hell raise cries in remorse. The tyrants are the residents of the area in the neighborhood of this well.
- The Imam (a.s) also added,' One should not harm or ridicule others in a hurry! Who knows the subject of such treatment is a *momin* of which fact he is unaware!'
- Adopt softness and kindness in your attitude. Anger and stealth are the weapons of the Satan. Allah likes nothing more that softness and humility.

- In another narration the Prophet (a.s.) says,' When a muslim slaps another, Allah will take asunder all his bones on the Day of Judgement and put him in the Hellfire with a collar around his neck.'
- A person who attends on a tyrannical king with a whipcord in his hand, then Allah will turn the whipcord into a snake on the Day of Judgement. The snake will be of seventy yards in length and will enwrap around the body of the person.
- When a person reports against a *momin* to a tyrant and makes false allegations against him, the reporter would lose the Rewards for all his good acts, even if the subject doesn't come to any harm because of the reporter carrying malicious tales.
- Hazrat Ali (a.s) asked the Prophet of Islam (a.s) , ' Ya Rasool Allah! What will happen to a cruel ruler who doesn't treat his subjects in accordance with Allah's Dicvtates?' The Prophet (a.s) replied, ' He will be the fourth in the Hell after Satan, Qabeel and Pharoah.'
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that when a person slays a *momin* for no fault of his, will be asked at the time of his own demise,' Accept the death of a Jew, a Christian or a Fire-worshipper!'
- The Prophet (a.s.) said,' A person remains a Muslim till he condescends to kill another Muslim! If he intentionally kills a Muslim, then his repentence will never be accepted by Allah!'
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that a murderer would be raised on the Day of Judgement as the worst offender and sinner. He will swear that he didn't ever kill anyone nor was he a party to bloodshed. Allah will reply,' You reported maliciously against a particular creature of mine that became the cause of his execution!'
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that there are three types of persons who will never enter the Heaven: Those who shed blood for no valid reason, those who drink intoxicants and those who are backbiters.'
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that the first Judgement that Allah would deliver on the Day of Reckoning will be about the shedding of the blood of innocent Muslims. Hazrat Adam (a.s)'s two sons will be the first to be questioned. Then the others involved in the killing of Muslims will come up for judgement. The killers will produce their victims before Allah in the condition they were at the momemt of commitment of the crime; their bodies and faces smeared with blood. The killed persons would say, ' O Allah! This person has rendered me to this state!' The killer will not be able to deny his sin. Also, when a person kills an innocent person in this world, Allah will kill him in a similar manner a hundred times in the Hereafter.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s) also said, ' When someone kills a *momin* intentionally for no fault of his, Allah will enter all the sins of the victim to the account of the killer.
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s) that,' On the Day of Judgement one person would go near another and smear his face and body with blood. The first person would say,'What have I done to you to deserve this treatment?' He will

reply,' On such-and-such a day you had uttered a falsehood about me that became the cause of my execution!'

- Authentic tradition mentions that Allah says,' One who puts a *momin* to ridicule would be tantamount to have rebelled against Me! ' In the eyes of Allah the worst sinner is one who has ridiculed or killed a *momin.* When a person kills another innocent person Allah will transer all the sins of the victim to the account of the killer.

THE RIGHTS OF THE RULERS

Religiously upright rulers have plenty of rights over their subjects. This is because of the fact that they honor the rights and privileges of the people and protect them from enemies and help them in times of natural calamities.

It is narrated in an authentic tradition that just rulers have to be respected and adored. This act on the part of the subjects would be like respecting Allah. In certain other traditions a *sultan-eadil* (just ruler) is referred to as *imam-e-adil* (a just Imam).

- It is narrated from Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that when Nimrod pushed Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) into the fire, and he emerged safe and sound, he was exiled from the city and he reached the realm of the kings of *Qabt.* Accompanying him was *Hazrat Sarah* hidden in a wooden chest that *na-mahrams* didn't set eyes on her. The inspectors at the border made a search of Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) and wanted him to open the chest for their scrutiny. He said that in the chest was his spouse who was also his maternal cousin. But they forcibly opened the chest and discovered an extremely beautiful damsel emerging from the chest. They informed the king of the matter who ordered all his courtiers to assemble. When Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) presented himself at the court, the king insisted on him to open the chest. Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) said 'whatever tax you wish to levy, do take from me, but don't ask me to open the chest. Any stranger (*na-mahram)* setting eyes on her is taboo for me. But the king didn't give heed to Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.)'s entreaties. When he saw the extremely beautiful Hazrat Sarah, he proferred his hand to her. Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) then prayed to Allah,' O my sustainer! Do protect my honor!' The king's hand suddenly dried up like the dead wood. He pleaded to Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) to pray to Allah that he got restored to his former condition. Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) prayed to Allah and the king's hand was restored to the former condition. The king was full of remorse and treated Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) with respect. He presented to Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) with a slave-girl who was Hazrat Hajera who was later to mother the Prophet Ismail (a.s.). Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) started from the place when the king accompanied him some distance as a mark of respect. Then Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) received a revelation that he should not demean the king by making him walk behind himself.

Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) then told to the king that Allah didn't like him walking ahead of the king of the realm and that he must walk behind the monarch. The king was much impressed with what Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) said and willingly embraced his Faith.

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said that Allah exhorts one should not talk ill of kings that they are in their position with His Consent. The people get a ruler they deserve! If the people are unruly, disobedient to Allah, then they would get a tyrannical ruler. Therefore, instead of complaining against an unjust ruler, they should try to reform themselves that Allah appoints a just monarch over them.

THE DISADVANTAGE OF NEARNESS TO A RULER

Nearness to the kings and nobles are the cause of loss both in this world and the Hereafter.When a person gets recognition for being close to the rulers, he will be subject of ridicule for falling from the good books of the rulers, he will also be deprived of the Rewards of the Hereafter for upholding the wrong deeds of the ruler. This way he goes fuirther and further away from Allah.

Being close to the rulers, one becomes party to the acts of omission and commission of hi masters and secondly he has to maintain affection for the masters all the time. Allah's dictates are definitely against this practice.

La tarkanu Ilal-lazeena zalamu- Verse 11, ayat 113
Don't get attracted towards the unkind.
Doing this, one will taste the Hellfire.

Therefore, there are many traditions against maintaining closeness with such people. The person has to accede to the bad deeds of such people. This becomes an act of *shirk.* The person, observing the misdeeds of these people develops the proclivity to commit wrong deeds himself. He cannot sit quietly in the company of such masters and has to uphold their misdeeds. This in itself is disobedience of Allah and the Prophet (a.s.). The person will have no power to oppose the master's wrong deeds and, therefore, will be abandoning *nahi an al munkar.* For his selfish ends the person has to force himself to follow their wrong example to protect his own honor. He also turns callous hearted because of living day and night in the company of the masters.

- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) that a parsimonious person is never happy. The jealous is deprived of the ordinary pleasures of life. The kings are never considerate. A lier is never thoughtful. A foolish person devoid of wisdom never achieves importance. The Imam also said that if a friend acquires power and pelf, his good behaviour towards you

reduces nine times when comparing his attitude in the past. Even then, one should not deem him a bad friend!

- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) has been quoted authentically,' Four things mar the heart and make a person unkind.

    1. Watching dances and listening to music
    2. Using foul language.
    3. Frequently visiting the kings and rulers.
    4. Being constantly in search of game.

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- It is narrated from the Prophet 0f Islam (a.s.) that one who keeps company of the kings, becomes a scheming person. The closer he goes to the king, the farther away he goes from Allah.
- It is authentically narrated from Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) that a person who perpetuates unkindness and the one who helps and abets in this act will both be sinners.
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " a person who praises an unkind ruler and for the sake of worldly gains behaves in a submissive manner, he will be the companion of that ruler in the Hell. One who shows the way of unkindness to a tyrant, he will be thrown into the Hell with *Haaman.* One who picks up quarrel with others in support of an unkind person, the *Malak al Maut* (the angel of death) will tell him at the time of his death,' I give you foreboding of Allah's curse and a place in the Hell!'.
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that one should not go to a company where a tyrannical ruler might punish or kill people. This is advised because one will not be able to come to the rescue of the downtrodden. It is mandatory to go to the rescue of a person who is the subject of tyranny. When one is not present in such a situation, nor will there be the chance of getting news of any such harsh treatment, then the person will not be under any obligation to act.

HELPERS OF THE CRUEL PEOPLE

After getting fatally struck by the assasin's weapon, Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) made the following will to Imam Hassan (a.s.), " My son! Befriend a virtuous person for the sake of his virtues; maintain acquaintance with the transgressor (faasiq) only to the extent necessary that your Faith is guarded against his evil designs..Your heart should beware of the transgressors."

- It is narrated that those who willfully help the cruel will remain under fiery curtains on the Day of Judgement. An angel will herald on the orders of Allah asking for the cruel people and their helpers and abetters who put wool (*sauf*) in their ink-pots, sealed their hampers of wealth and provided them with other kind of help. Such abetters too would be counted amongst the cruel.
- It is also mentioned in the traditions that,' One doesn't come closer to a king, unless he moves away from Allah. None becomes very rich that it becomes harder for him to render account on the day of Judgement. A person doesn't have more followers and hasn't Satans in his following.'
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that one should guard himself from evil by adopting piety and virtue.. One should strengthen his Faith by recourse to *Taqiyyah* (permitted subterfuge). Instead of approaching kings for succor, one should supplicate to Allah. Learn to be contented. A *momin* who cringes before a king or a faithless person for worldly gains, Allah considers him as His enemy! The worldly possessions of such a person lose their value. He will not get any reward for performing Haj and Umrah, nor for freeing of slaves!'

MEETING THE MEN IN AUTHORITY

Although it is not desirable for *momins* to become regular retainers at the courts of kings and nobles, there are definitely certains conditions under which maintaining such contacts becomes imperative. These conditions are:

1. If there is danger to life and property by keeping totally away from persons in authority.. In such circumstances, keeping contact with them under *Taqiyyah* is allowed..This was the reason that the Holy Imams (a.s.) never tried to antagonize the rulers.
2. Maintaining relations with rulers is allowed when securing help for a *momin* or getting him relief from some hardship is achieved through such contacts.
3. If the persons in authority are cruel but are amenable to mellow their stance through good advice, then it is desirable to keep good rapport with them.
    - It has been narrated in the traditions that the *Zakat* for holding office of authority is providing help to the *momin* brothers. As wealth increases by virtue of taking out Zakat, similarly the authority and respect of a person enhances if he helps *momins* through his authority and position.
    - In another tradition the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," I would rather fall from a hill and shatter into pieces than getting imposed on people as the representative of a tyrannical ruler or condescending to set foot in such a court. I might agree to go there only if a *momin* finds relief with my initiative in going there or someone gets absolved of false and serious charges or his debts get cleared with my intercession.
    - The Prophet (a.s.) added,' remember! The least punishment for the abetters of the tyrants is that they will have a curtain of fire in front of them till the time when Allah Has taken the full account of their deeds. '

- Further the Prophet (a.s.) told to Ziyad bin Qalaad,' O Ziyaad! When you are appointed to a position of authority by cruel rulers show kindness to your *momin* brothers. Perhaps that would become the cause of your deliverence!'
- It is authentically narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s),' There is no cruel and unjust ruler who is not having a *momin* administrator on his rolls. Allah administers justice to *momin shias* through him.and saves them from the cruelty of the tyrant. But the reward for that *momin* on the day of Judgement would be the least. Of all other *momins.* This, because of his proximity to the tyrant during his living years!'
- Hazrat Luqman (a.s.) used to visit kings and nobles to give them sermons and advice. He used to take pity on them observing them surrounded by umpteen calamities. He used to wonder over their craving for the worldly riches. He always derived lessons from the aberrations in their characters and behaviors. This way the Prophet (a.s.) used to keep his worldly desires in control.

ABOUT GOOD MORALS

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- It is authentically narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that the Faith of such *momins* is perfect who have excellent morals.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) says," On the Day of Judgement nothing would be rated better than the good behavior of the people."
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that in the eyes of Allah no action of a person is more acceptable than making others one's followers through good behavior.
- In another tradition it is mentioned that good moral behavior takes one to the status of the person who had fasted all his life and offered prayers late into the nights.
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.)," The major cause of my people achieving Heaven will be abstention from things termed taboo by Allah and adopting piety and good behavior."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that good moral behavior melts away sins like the rays of sunlight melt the snow.
- He further said that doing good to fellowbeings and living amicably amongst the people, keeping the dwellings inhabited enhances longevity.
- In another tradition he said that good behavior is a Gift from Allah. There are certain traits of behavior that are hereditary and there are certain others that are cultivated by the person. The narrator asked,' Ya Hazrat! Which is better of the two?' The Imam (a.s.) replied,'The traits that are there in the person from birth that they are the fortunate ones whom Allah has endowed with these good traits and he cannot act contrary to these. One who adopts good traits by practice has to

control his mind and actions as a penance to gain the Pleasure of Allah! There is much reward for such effort!'

- In another tradition that Allah give reward equal to that of Jehad to creatures who behave well with their fellow-beings.
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that one day the Prophet (a.s.) was in the mosque when a slave-girl of one of the Ansar came and caught hold of the lapel of his robe. The Prophet (a.s.) stood up with the thought that the girl wished to say something. But the girl remained mum. She acted similarly three times. When the Prophet (a.s.) rose a fourth time, the slave-girl cut away a corner of his robe. The companions were upset at the impertinence of the girl.and said,' O girl! Why did you trouble the Prophet (a.s.)?' She said,' There is a sick person at our place. My master has asked me to fetch a small piece of the Prophet's raiment that with it's aura the ailing person would get well. Whenever I tried to clip a piece of the raiment, the Prophet (a.s.) rose and I felt shy of doing the task. Alas! In the fourth attempt I took courage in my hands and am going home with the clipping in my hand!'

DISCOURTESY

- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that illtemper and bad manners spoil faith and neutralize the good deeds of a person the way vinegar spoils the honey.
- The Imam (a.s.) also said that the penitence and repentence of an ill-mannered person is not accepted because while he is repentant of one bad deed, he perpetuates another through his misbehavior!
- The Imam (a.s.) added that a *momin* has always to be good mannered, soft spoken and of amiable disposition. An infidel, to the contrary, is ill tempered and harsh in his behavior.
- Someone asked the Prophet (a.s.), " Ya Hazrat! What is the guage of good behavior?' The Prophet replied,' Keep your temperament soft that no one feels hurt from your attitude. Adopt soft and sweet language that pleases others. When you meet your *momin* brothers, meet them with warmth and pleasantness!'
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) has said,' If you cannot please all the people in the world with your wealth, then make them your friends with yuour good behavior and temperament!'
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that when the Prophet (a.s.) got the news of the death of Saad bin Maaz Ansari, he proceeded along with the companions to join the funeral procession. He stood near Saad while he was given the ritual final bath. When the bath was over, he accompanied the bier without footwear and bare-head as is the custom of the mourners. He sometimes carried the bier on his right shoulder and at other on his left. On reaching the graveside, the Prophet (a.s.) himself descended into the pit and

with his own hands lowered Saad into the grave. Then he arranged the bricks in the grave and put soil to fill the grave. While putting soil into the grave the Prophet (a.s.) said, ‘ Saad’s mortal remains will get lost in the soil but Allah likes that the deeds one does are good and durable!’ When the Prophet (a.s.) was giving the last touches to the grave of Saad, the dead companion’s mother cried,’ O Saad! Greetings on your achieving the Heaven!’ The Prophet said, ‘ O mother of Saad! Keep quiet! At the moment Saad is undergoing the pressures (*Fishaar)* of the grave!’ When the Prophet returned from the grave-yard, the companions asked him,’ Ya Hazrat! The way you have attended Saad’s funeral, we have not seen you do any time in the past. You went bare-footed. You kept your head uncovered.’ He replied,’ I saw the angels do likewise and I followed suit. .The companions asked,’ Sometimes you carried the bier on your right shoulder and at others on the left?’ The Prophet replied,’ I was with Jibrael, whichever side he went, I went the same way!’ The companions asked, ‘ You have yourself given bath to Saad, led the funeral prayer, lowered him into the grave and in the end said that he was undergoing the *Fishaar* of the grave!’ The Prophet replied, ‘ Saad was undergoing the *Fishaar* because he used to treat the people of his house and friends with ill-temper.’

- It is narrated that the Prophet (a.s.) has said, ‘ Two traits should not be there in Muslims, the first is miserliness and the other bad temper.’ The Prophet said,’ O Abu Dharr! The sign of a *momin* is that he is good mannered. An ill-tempered person is never a friend of Allah! A good mannered *momin* is far better than the pious person who is rude to other fellow beings.
- The Prophet of Islam(a.s.) has said,’ Good manners are the pleasant behavior of a *momin* towards others by way of warmth in looks and talk. He offers help to a brother *momin* in times of need and profers gifts on him that please him!’ The Prophet (a.s.) added, ‘ O Abu Dharr! A good and clean word is a sort of charity. If the word has benefited a *momin,* the one who uttered it would get rewarded!’ The Prophet (a.s.) said, ‘ O Abu Dharr! Going to a mosque and sitting there is futile unless one does these three things: Offers prayers, recites the Quran and teaches or learns the things about religious rites.’’ O abu Dharr! Allah is not limited to time and space! He doesn’t need any house! Hypocrites are those who say that He is everything while everything is the reflection of Hiss Intrinsic Traits (*Sifaat e Kamaliah)*. One can only imagine His Greatness looking at things around oneself. The *Kaaba,* constructed out of bricks and mortar, which has neither gold nor precious stones embedded in it, is the place of prostration for the monarchs and the populace. The old and dilapidated mosques resembling the Kaabah are so much revered that even the rugged mats in them are better than the the tributes of Ceaser and Qaqaan. Of all the benefits derived from the mosques, the one most valuable is that they are the places for congregations of the Muslims. These are the places where people t gather and exchange greetings and news about each other.’

THE BENEFITS OF CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

- It has appeared in the traditions that space should not be left vacant in the rows of the congregational prayers; it is said that the Satan occupies such vacant positions.
- There is another version that one should not stand in prayer at a distance from the congregation because, if a sheep grazes at some distance from the flock, there will be the likelihood of the wolf devouring it.
- It is authentically narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) ,' On the land there are rows of my followers like there are rows of the angels in the Firmament.' Then he (a.s.) added,' One genuflection (*Rakat*) in congregation is equivalent to the 24, each of which genuflection is superior in the eyes of Allah to continuous prayer offered over a period of forty years. The day when Allah will gather all the creatures from the Day of Creation to the end, He will protect from the hardships of the Day of Reckoning one who has taken even a step to go and join the Congregational Prayer. To such a person Allah will provide a place in the Heaven.
- In another tradition the Prophet (a.s.) says,' Whoever offers the *Fajr* (morning) prayer in congregation and then recites the supplications till the sunrise, Allah will award him seventy echelons in the Heaven. Every echelon will be equal to the distance traversed by a fast steed in seventy years. One who offers the *Zuhr* prayer in congregation, , Allah will grant him fifty echelons in the Garden of Eden. The distance of each echelon will be equal to the distance traveled by a fast horse in a period of fifty years. One who offers the *Asr* prayer in congregation, his reward will be equal to freeing eight thousand slaves from the progeny of Hazrat Ismail (a.s.). A person who prays *Maghrib* in congregation, on his name will be entered reward equal to performing a Haj and Umrah. One who prays *Isha* in congregation, his reward will be equal to the prayers of *Lailat al Qadr.*'
- It is narrated that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) told to his companions,' Do you wish to be informed of an act that can obliterate the effects of your sins and the virtues enhance in the consideration of Allah?' They all said in unison, ' Ya Hazrat! Please do tell!' The Prophet (a.s.) said,' Perform ablution thoroughly, unmindful of coolness of weather or water, go for the prayer in the mosque and tarry there for the next prayer. One who goes to the mosque after doing the ablutions, prays in congregation and awaits arrival of more people there for the next congregation, the angels pray for him," O Allah! Forgive him! Be kind on him and shower Your Blessings on him!"
- In another tradition it is mentioned,' When a person leads a congregation, with the consent of the gathering, he should maintain moderation during the prayer. He should recite verses keeping in mind the physical status of the group joining the prayer. Allah willl reward him equal to the combined reward for the congregation and there will be no reduction in their rewards too.' And said,' As many steps as a person takes to go and join a

congregation in a mosque, seventy thousand virtues will be added to his record for every step taken. He will be raised seventy stages in his status. .If a person dies while going for a congregation, Allah will appoint seventy thousand angels to visit him in the grave and remain with him and pray for him till he is raised from there.

- It is said in another tradition, ' A person who hears the *Adhaan* and comes out of the mosque for no valid reason, is a hypocrite.
- It is authentically narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that one must keep a good opinion about a person who prays in congregation five times a day. One should accept the witness of such a person.'
- In another tradition the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said,' One who offers the *Fajr and Isha* prayers in congregation, will remain in Allah's Care. If someone inflicts hardship on such a person, it will be like inflicting hardship on Allah. One who breaks a promise given to such a person, it will be like making a promise to Allah and breaking it.'
- One congregational prayer is equivalent to twentyfive prayers offered individually.
- Seek sustenance from Allah from the time of commencement of *Fajr* till sunrise. Its effect is more pronounced than traveling in search of trade.
- O Abu Dharr! More knowledge is definitely superior tnan more prayer without knowledge.. Without piety even if you pray to the extent that your back hunches with the exertion, even then it will not benefit you if there is no piety in your effort. Those who abstained from taboo things, adopted piety and abstained from worldly wishes, are certainly Allah's friends and His select beings!.

PIETY & ABSTINENCE

There are many stages of piety and abstinence. The first stage is avoidance of disbelief and hypocricy. These acts will be the cause for one burning in the Hellfire.One who doesn't overcome disbelief and hypocricy, cannot go any further on the path of piety.. The prayer and supplication of such persons willl be futile.. The second stage of piety is abstinence from all taboo things. The third stage of piety is avoiding things that are not taboo but should better be avoided. These are termed the *makroohat.* A pious person who has reached the third stage will not be attracted to anything other than riveting his attention on the Creator, Allah. The first two stages of piety are the formative stages of a person perfect in piety. The more a person excels in these two stages, the more acceptable he becomes in the consideration of the Creator. His acts reflect nearness to Allah, love for Him, understanding of the Creator and exemplary behaviour with fellow- creatures.. It is said in the Holy Quran, *"Attaqullaha haqqa tuqatehi'.* While doing commentary on this verse, Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said," True piety is that men obey Allah and don't commit sins. They

remember Allah every moment of their lives and don't ever forget Him! They thank him profusely for His Bounties and abstain from ungratefulness to Him!

- Someone asked Ameer al Momineen (a.s.),"Ya Hazrat! Which is the best of acts?" He said, " Piety and abstinence!"
- It is narrated fom Imam Jafar e Sadiq ," Little action with piety is better than excessive and unpious deeds."
- The Imam (a.s.) also said, " Avoid things that are termed taboo by Allah! Strive in the way of prayer and obedience! Remember, effort at prayer without avoiding the taboo is always futile!"
- Omer bin Sayeed asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) to give him some advice. The Imam (a.s.) said," Abstain from taboo acts! Adopt piety. Abstain from everything that Allah forbids you to do! Strive in prayer and Rememberance of Allah. Be sure that any effort at piety is futile if the taboo are not avoided!"
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) that protecting oneself from *Haram*, which is termed *wara,* is binding on Muslims. There is no reward for good deeds in the court of Allah without *wara.*
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that among all the prayers, *wara* is the most difficult. *Wara* means saving oneself from doing haram acts.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, " Only those are counted my companions who are more pious and pray to Allah with hope for Rewards from Him.
- It is narrated in a tradition that a person should be termed a *momin* who fulfils our commandments. He will have the desire in his heart to follow our instructions. One very important requirement to be met by such a person is that he is pious and abstinent. He should make piety his adornment that he craves for Allah's Bounties and with *wara* he saves himself from the guiles of our enemies. He avoids doubtful things, offers more prayer and dutifully observes the mandatory commandments." " The most pious is one who abstains from the taboo."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that
  "it is necessary for Muslims to practice *Wara* by abstaining from taboo and suspicious acts. *Wara* is a component of the Faith that we uphold and that is the basis of our prayer to Allah. We expect the same from our friends and Shias. Therefore, don't commit Haram acts and put us to the trouble of interceding on your behalf on the Day of Judgement! Intercession in such a situation will be very difficult!"
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said," Allah has not given respectability to anyone who lives in ignorance and Has never belittled anyone for his simplicity and affability."
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said,"A person who has three traits will be awarded *Hoor al Ain* in the Heaven:
    1. He controls his anger.

2. gets wounded fighting in the way of Allah and keeps calm..
3. Despite opportunities presenting themselves for making illegitimate (*Haram)* earnings, he abstains from it for the fear of Allah.”. .   .

- Authentic sources narrate from Imam Reza (a.s.) that,” Allah sent a revelation to one of His Prophets (a.s.) that’ when you stir out tomorrow morning, you must eat the first thing that comes in your view!. Secondly, whatever you see, hide it away.. Thirdly, whatever presents itself to you, accept it.. Fourthly, Whatever comes before you, don’t disappoint it! Fifthly, run away from the thing.’ At dawn the Prophet stirred out. The first thing that met his eyes was a mountain. He wondered that Allah has ordered him to eat the first thing that he saw. He again thought that if he had no ability to do the thing, Allah would not have ordered him to do it. With this thought he went nearer the mountain to eat it. . The nearer he went, the smaller the mountain became. When he touched the mountain, it was the size of a morsel. The Prophet ate it and found it very delicious. The Prophet went a little further and noticed a tray made of gold. . Since he was under instructions to hide it, the Prophet dug a small pit and buried the tray in the ground. He proceeded a little further. When he turned back, he noticed the golden tray jutting out a little from the ground. He thought, I have fulfilled Allah’s order about the tray and that he had no more concern about it. Travelling a little further, the Prophet found a bird flying. He also found a hawk hot in pursuit of the bird. The bird sought the Prophet’s protection from the hawk. The Prophet therefore opened his sleeve for the bird to take refuge there. The hawk approached the Prophet and complained that it was trying to hunt the bird for quite sometime and that now he was depriving it of its food. The Prophet was under instructions not to disappoint anyone. Therefore he carved a portion of the flesh from his own loin and gave to the hawk. The Prophet went a little further and noticed a putrifying animal carcass. Vermin were crawling out of the carcass. He was under instructions to run away from it. Therefore the Prophet moved away from there and proceeded towards his home. In the night he dreamed that Allah was saying,’ O my Prophet! You have done whatever I had instructed you to do! But you didn’t realize what these things were in reality?’ The Prophet said, ‘ Yes! I don’t know.’ Allah replied, ‘ O my Prophet! The mountain that you saw was the human trait of anger. When a person gets angry, he goes out of control and forgets himself. But, if he controls his anger, then the result will be like the delicious morsel that you consumed! The golden tray was an example of good deeds. However much you hide them, Allah exposes them to view that you get respect in this world and Reward in the Hereafter. The example of the bird and the hawk is that when someone seeks help from you, don’t disappoint him.. The example of

the putrifying carcass is like back-biting and carrying of tales which must be avoided.'"

THE AFFABILITY OF THE IMAMS (A.S.)

Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) says that the Prophet used his own cloak as his bedding and the skin of sheep filled with the bark of datepalm as the pillow while sleeping. One night the cloak was folded double to make the bed more comfortable. At this the Prophet (a.s.) said, ' Because of sleeping on a softer bed I couldn't rise early in the morning and was delayed for the prayer. In future don't fold the cloak while making my bed!'

It is not a hidden fact that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) faced untold hardships at the hands of the Prophet's companions and of his own companions. But, despite the capability and authority he bore all this ungrudgingly. A case in point is the Battle of the Camel (*Jang e Jaml).* In this battle his favorite companions were martyred. But after victory in the battle Hazrat Ali (a.s.) pardoned the litigants. He had the complete authority to punish the combatants. He sent Janab Aisha (R) with due respect to Medina. He sent a retinue of seventy women to accompany her. He released Marvan bin Hakm despite all his impertinence. Abdallah bin Zubair was taken prisoner and released. He was a sworn enemy of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) and had behaved very badly with the Imam.

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) gave similar treatment to the *Khawarij of Nehrwan.* When the accursed Ibn e Muljim mortally wounded Hazrat Ali (a.s.), he didn't order immediate execution of the culprit. He instructed Imam Hassan (a.s.) not to inflict more than one blow of the sword to the accused. He also asked him not to sever the ears and the nose of Ibn e Muljim, as was the custom of dealing with such criminals those days. He told that he should be provided with the same food that the Imam partook of. During the time of Hazrat Ali (a.s) there were thousands of *Khawarij* who openly used to accuse him of infidelity and criticized him in several ways. But the Imam (a.s) forgave them and never took them to task.

- It is narrated that one day Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) noticed a woman carrying a canister full of water on her shoulder. He took the canister from her and told her that he would help her carry it to her home. On the way the Imam (a.s) inquired about her affairs. The woman said, " My husband was deputed by Ameer al Momineen (a.s) to the field of battle where he was martyred. Now I am left with my orphaned children. I am left with no means of maintaining them. I do small tasks with the neighbors and try to eke a living from what little I

earn." The Imam (a.s.) left the canister at the woman's house and returned home. The whole night he was worrying about her and the orphans. At dawn he took a sack full of flour, dates, meat and other eatables and headed for the woman's house. The companions said, " Ya Hazrat! WE shall carry the burden!" The Imam (a.s.) said," You can certainly carry the burden here. But who will carry my burden on the Day of Reckoning?" Carrying the sack, the Imam (a.s) knocked at the door of the woman. The woman opened the door and asked, " Who are you, please?" The Imam (a.s.) said," I am the person who helped you carry your water canister yesterday! Now I have fetched some provisions for your children!" The woman said," May Allah give you Reward for your kindness and may Allah also Judge between me and Ali (a.s.)" The Imam said, " To earn a little more reward, I wish to dough some flour and make bread for your children. Either you take care of the children in that time or I shall tend the children and you bake the bread!" The woman said, " I can make better bread. If you take care of my children, I shall do that comfortably!" Therefore the woman got busy with her work and the Imam (a.s.) cooked some meat and also looked after the kids by giving them some dates to eat. When the meat was done, he fed small morsels to the children and said, " O kids! Forgive Ali for being the cause of depriving you of the love of your father!" When the dough was done, the woman asked, " Kind sir! Please light the oven that the dough is ready." Hazrat Ali (a.s.) started warming the oven when a woman from the neighborhood visited. This woman knew Hazrat Ali (a.s) She told to the lady of the house, " what has happened to you?! You are asking the Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) do these small tasks for you!" Hearing this the woman ran and fell at the feet of Hazrat Ali (a.s) and said," Ya Ameer al Momineen! With what face can I go infront of Allah! Please forgive me!" The Imam said, " To the contrary, I am ashamed! With what face I can approach Allah for the hardship I have caused to you and your children!"

- It is narrated that one day Hazrat Mohammed bin Hanafia and Imam Hassan (a.s) had some difference of opinion. Hazrat Mohammed bin Hanafia wrote a letter to Imam Hassan (a.s.), " Brother! Your and my father, is Hazrat Ali (a.s.). But your mother is Hazrat Fatima Zehra (a.s.), the daughter of the Prophet (a.s.). If the entire world turns to gold and comes in the possession of my mother, even then she cannot claim equality with Hazrat Fatima Zehra (a.s.). As soon as you read this letter, please come to me and make up the difference we have between us! I am asking you this because you are much higher than me in the status. Greetings." When Imam Hassan (a.s.) received the letter, he immediately went to Hazrat Mohammed bin Hanafia and reconciled the difference with him. They never again had any differences between them.

- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) said," Three things elevate a person : performing ablution in cold weather, waiting in the mosque for the next congregation after joining one congregation, participating in every congregational prayer.
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " I shall ask Ali (a.s.) to torch every person's house who missed a congregational prayer without any reason whatsoever!"
- The Prophet (a.s.) said, " O Abu Dharr! Adopt piety that no good deed is as useful as being pious." Abu Dharr asked, " O Prophet (a.s)! What is piety?" The prophet (a.s.) replied, " A person does good deeds, feeds the hungry, take care of the neighbor. But on the other hand commits sins. Piety is doing all the good deeds and not commiting sins!"
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, " The most virtuous person is one who forgives the tyranny of the tyrant, he does good to a person who has harmed him, he is generous to one who caused him loss!" Then the Prophet (a.s.) added, " *Muttaqi (pious)* is one who bears ill-treatment with calm and controls his anger in obedience to Allah! He is steadfast in Jehad!"
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) never illtreated his worst enemies. He always forgave them. One person came from the Prophet (a.s)'s rear and forcefully pulled his shawl. This sudden jolt caused a sprain in the neck of the Prophet (a.s.).He (a.s.) turned back and asked, " What is the matter?" The man said, " Give me some help!" The Prophet (a.s.) immediately fulfilled his want.
- After the conquest of Mecca the infidels were certain that the Prophet (a.s.) would wreak revenge against them. To the contrary the Prophet (a.s.) pardoned all of them and even gave help to many of them.
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) was asked, " Who is the most powerful?" The Imam replied, " On who is the most affable and gentle!" Then he (a.s.) was asked, " Who is the most affable?" The Imam replied, " One who can control his anger the best!"
- There was no limit of affability and gentleness of the Last of the Prophets (a.s). He could pardon the cruel woman who chewed the liver of his martyred and adorable uncle, Hazrat Hamza. The Prophet (a.s.) also gave the house of his mortal enemy the status of the place of amnesty in the city of Mecca. From the day of his proclamation of Prophethood till his death, the Prophet (a.s.) faced untold hardships with great equanimity. The Intensity of these hardships was such that he had himself observed that no Prophets of the yore had faced such opposition in their times. But he (a.s.) faced the hardships without any complaints.
- Similar was the attitude of his Vicegerent, Hazrat Ali (a.s.). The hardships that he faced after the departure of the Prophet (a.s.) were not bearable for any lesser mortal. He proved to the world that Ali

ibne Abi Talib (a.s.) was not only the most chivalrous but had the greatest quality of patience and equanimity in adversity. It was his ken that he bore patiently the hardships heaped on the beloved daughter of the Prophet (a.s). In the Battle of Jaml Hazrat Ali (a.s.) achieved victory over his mortal enemies and magnanimously pardoned them. It was his greatness that he sent the vanquished lady to Medina in the care of seventy armed female guards. When his assassin was arrested, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) ordered cool beverage to be served to him to set his wracked nerves at rest.

- An authentic source quotes that one day Muawiya was holding court. Zarar bin Hamza was present there. . Muawiya asked him to recount the qualities of Hazrat Ali (a.s.). Zarar said," By Allah! Ali (a.s.) was extremely thoughtful and firm in the way of Allah! Whatever he said, used to be the truth! Whatever he ordered, always served the path of justice! From all his sides the sea of Allah's Knowledge used to flow! His thoughts used to be full of learning. His eyes used to be wet in the love of Allah and supplication to the Creator! He always wore coarse cloth and didn't relish delicious food. Amongst us, he used to be one of us! When we approached him, he would gently ask us to sit near him. But because of his indescribable aura, we were not able to speak to him! When he smiled, his teeth shone like the pearls. He respected the persons with learning and showed love to the poor and needy. By Allah! I have seen him supplicate to Allah with such bathos as one bitten by a snake or a scorpion cries! I have heard that mostly he used to say during his supplications the following words,' o world! Don't attract me! Go and mislead someone else! You cannot decoy me! I have divorced you thrice! O world! Your life is very short! You can't be faithful to anyone! It is futile to crave for you!'" Zarar had reached in his narrative up to this point when tears started flowing from Muawiya's eyes and all those present in the court too started crying.
- Abu Dharr Ghiffari narrates that Hazrat Jafar bin Abi Talib bought a slave-girl from Abyssinia for four hundred Dirhams and presented to Hazrat ameer al Momineen (a.s.). But hazrat Ali (a.s.), to please Hazrat Fatima Zehra (a.s.), freed the slave-girl and gave away four hundred Dirhams in charity. At this juncture a Revelation came to the Prophet (a.s.)," Of Prophet (a.s.)! Tell Ali (a.s.) that for the act of releasing the slave-girl we have gifted to him the Heaven and for giving four hundred Dirhams in charity we have given him the charge of the Hell. Whosoever Ali (a.s.) wants to send to the Heaven, he has the right to do! Similarly, whoever he decides to consign to the Hell, he can do it!" Abu Dharr continued, " From that day Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) used to say that he was the *Qaseem e Naar wa Jannat*, the Distributor of the Hell and the Heaven.
- Similarly, the patience and forbearance that Janab Fatima bint e Rasool (a.s.) manifested after the departure of her father is

exemplary. Books of history are full with the description of her forbearance.. The breaking of the door of her house and the martyrdom of Janab Mohsin through miscarriage was no less a calamity!

- Imam Hussain (a.s) has set an example for the annals of human history by offering the supreme sacrifice in the cause of Allah.He saw his friends, relatives, brothers, nephews, sons getting martyred one after the other in the course of one day! On his own body there were innumerable wounds inflicted by spears, arrows and swords by the inhuman enemy! Under the dagger of the assassin the Imam (a.s.) offered a prayer of thianks to his Creator, Allah!

THE AFFABILITY OF IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S.)

- It is narrated from Imam Ali bin al Hussain (a.s.) that," When I proceeded along with my revered father from Medina towards Kerbala, I noticed that he used to talk a lot about Hazrat Yahya (a.s.) wherever he halted or departed. One day he said,' The world in the eyes of Allah is such a futile thing that the severed head of the Prophet Yahya (a.s.) was given to a fornicating woman of Bani Israel as a gift!' The affability of the Imam (a.s.) was of such intensity that although his entire entourage was martyred in his presence and, despite the fact that all the angels, jinns and wild beasts were at his beck and call, he never for once thought of wreaking revenge on his enemies! Nor did he pray to Allah cursing the enemy! According to a narration, three hundred and sixty deep wounds were found on his martyred body. Another narration says that there were one hundred and eighty wounds inflicted with spears, and four thousand wounds from the arrows that were literally rained on his body! Even then the Imam didn't raise his hands to pray for the punishment of his cruel tormenters! He continued to make efforts to lead them to the path of righteousness till his last breath! With Allah's strength and the valor inherited from Haidar e Karar, the Imam(a.s.) dispatched many an infidel to Hell with his swordsmanship on that fateful day! In some narratives it is said that he killed one thousand nine hundred and fifty wretches! The number wounded by him is in addition to this number!"
- It is narrated that whenever Imam Hussain (a.s.) sat in a dark place in the night, his forehead and neck used to radiate so much that people used to notice his presence there.

THE AFFABILITY OF IMAM ZAIN AL ABEDEEN (A.S.) & OTHERS

- It is narrated that one day a crystal bowl slipped out of the hands of a slave girl of Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) and shattered into pieces. The girl was shaking with fear. The Imam said, " Why are you so much afraid? Go, I have freed you in the name of Allah!"
- One day a person used undesirable language against Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s). When he ignored the matter, the person reminded the Imam that he was the subject of the outburst. The Imam said, " I have forgiven you and overlook your mistake!"
- It is narrated that Imam Zain al Abedeen had freed one of his slaves and gave a small farm in his charge. One day the Imam (a.s.) went to inspect the farm and found to his dismay that the man, owing to his neglect, had spoilt the crop. The Imam was upset and hit the person once with a whip as a measure of reprimand. The Imam was very unhappy over what he had done in anger. He went home and called the person. When the man reached there, he found the Imam (a.s) without his shirt and the whip in his hand. The man was scared that more punishment was on its way. The Imam picked up the whip and gave to the man saying, " Today I have committed an excess against you! The way I whipped you, the same way you should whip me back!" The slave said, " O Master! I was thinking that you have called me to give me more punishment for my carelessness! Whatever punishment you mete out to me is justified!" The Imam again insisted that the slave should whip him back. The slave said, " May Allah protect me! I have forgiven you my *Qasas!"* When the Imam saw that the person was not budging an iota from his resolve, he told him," All right! As a compensation I give you the ownership of the farm on which you are working!"
- It is narrated that one day a few persons were invited for a meal at the place of Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.). The slave, who was detailed to serve the fare, was carrying a hot victual to the table. The tray in which the slave was carrying the hot dish slipped off his hands and fell on the Imam's little baby who was crawling in the room. The burn was so severe that the child instantly expired. The slave was mortified with fear. The Imam said, " Don't be afraid! You have not done anything intentionally! Go, I have freed you!" Then the Imam partook the meal with his guests. After the guests left, the Imam (a.s.) attended to the last rites of the dead child.
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that Allah sent a Revelation to the Prophet (a.s.) that when He didn't give to a *momin* anything that he wished for, there is always his best interest in the denial. The person must remain contented with what he has received. He should be equanimous in hardships. Thank Allah for His bounties.that he gets counted amongst the truthful!
- In another tradition the Imam (a.s.) narrates that whenever something happened, the Prophet (a.s.) never said that it would be better if the incident happened in a different way! The Prophet would say, " A person who talked in this manner is never a *momin* because this way he would be questioning

the Will of Allah. A person who resigns himself to the will of Allah, I witness that his prayers will definitely be answewred!"

- It is narrated that someone asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) , " Ya Hazrat! What is the way of recognizing a true *momin*?"The Imam (a.s.) said, " From the way he submits to Allah's will; whether in difficulty or in ease!"
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that Allah says," O sons of Adam! Obey me and don't remind Me of things that are of advantage to you! I know them better than you do!"
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s)," Affluence and respectability are in circulation! Wherever they find affability, they settle down and make a place for themselves!"
- The Imam (a.s.) said at another place that Allah sent a Revelation to the Prophet Dawood (a.s.), " O Dawood! When a person trusts me, is righteous, and turns his face from the populace, despite all the hurdles from the earth and the sky, I shall create the way of freedom for him. When a creature trusts my other creatures, I know the condition of his heart. I shall extinguish his means in the sky and obliterate his passages on the earth. Then I shall not care in which wilderness he gets killed!"
- The Imam said in another tradition, " When a person pays attention to tasks that please Allah, Allah will get attracted towards him and provide to him the things he likes to have. Whoever seeks help from Allah to abstain from sins, Allah will help him. One who receives the attention of Allah, never worries whatever calamities confront him! Because of his piety and abstention he is in a group of people that is in the care of Allah. Therefore, Allah says,' *Innal muttaqeena fi maqamin ameen- Doubtless, the pious are in the place of peace!"*
- It is narrated from Hazrat ameer al Momineen (a.s.), " Instead of craving for the thing you wish to have, think of Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) who saw the light and went in search of fire from his spouse and became the *Kaleem* and achieved Prophethood! The queen of Sheba, Bilqis, went on an outing and adopted Islam. The magicians in Pharoh's court came there to give him respect and themselves came to get the respectability of True Faith!"
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that Hazrat Moosa bin Imran (a.s.) addressed Allah, " O Lord! You send me out and leave behind my infant sons!" allah replied, " O Moosa! Are you not satisfied that I am their guardian and provider of sustenance!"
- It is authentically narrated from Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) that Hazrat Luqman (a.s.) advised his son, " O son! A person who doesn't trust Allah in search of sustenance, he must pity himself. He should think that Allah has created him and gave him sustenance in three situations where there is no provider other than Allah. Therefore, in the fourth stage, none other than Him will provide the livelihood!"
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) said, " O Abu Dharr! If you wish to become the strongest person, then adopt patience, forbearance and affability! "

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ A *momin* is one who is contented both in plenty and in penury!”
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) has said that man should thank Allah in all circumstances because His Bounties ar unaccountable.
- Hazrat Luqman (a.s.) advised his son, “ O son! There are four stages of the human life. Three stages are such that a person has none to help him. Allah Himself provides the person the sustenance during these stages. He saves the person from the heat and the cold in the mother’s womb. In the second stage when the person emerges from the mother’s womb, then Allah arranges the streams of milk for him. Then Allah creates the love of the child in the hearts of the parents that they strive hard to maintain him. When the same person grows into a full-fledged man, why should he have any doubts Allah’s kindness! He should now believe that Allah helped him when he was totally dependent and even at present He is more kind and loving than his own parents!”

TRUSTING ON ALLAH

- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that Satan claims that all the people are in his control excepting five types whom he cannot influence:
    1. Those who honestly trust in Allah for their tasks.
    2. Those who are busy supplicating to Allah day and night.
    3. The *momins,* who desire for other *momins* what they wish for themselves.
    4. Those who donot wail and cry in times of difficulty.
    5. Those who remain contented with whatever they earn and don’t complain of scarcities.
- It is narrated by an authentic source from Imam Reza (a.s.) that Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) inquired about a companion who was not present at his meeting.The companions said, ‘Ya Hazrat! He is unwell!’. Therefore, the Imam went to the house of the person to inquire about his health. When he saw him, the Imam (a.s.) noticed that the person was about to expire. The Imam sat near his head and said, ‘ Have faith in Allah!’ The man replied, ‘ I have strong faith in Allah, but I am extremely worried about my sons. They are the reason for my ailment!’ The Imam (a.s.) said,’ The One whom you ask to forgive your sins and enhance your virtues, depend on Him in the matter of your sons too! The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said,’ On the Night of Meraj, while I was passing through the *Sidrat al Muntaha* and looked at its branches and leaves, I noticed that from some leaves udders were hanging and milk was oozing from them. Honey dripped from some leaves and oil from some others. From certain other leaves flour and fruits of different types were falling.to the ground. From some branches rich raiments were hanging. I thought from where all these things are coming. At that time Jibrael was not with me that I could ask

him for an explation for these things. I was, at that time, beyond the jurisdiction where Jibrael was permitted to go!. Then Allah communicated to me,' O Mohammed (a.s.)! I have grown these things at the elevated place with the purpose of providing sustenance to your children! Tell the fathers of the sons that they should not be disheartened at their penury. As I have given birth to them, so shall I provide them their sustenance!"

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has narrated that Allah has said," One who has no faith in My Will and doesn't believe in what I have Ordained, he should look for some other sustainer! Whatever is written in your fate in the world, shall come to you however weak you might be! Whatever hardship is ordained for you, you shall have to face it even if you are the strongest person in the world. If you give up hope of getting back whatever you have lost, you will remain happy thereafter.' One who is contented with whatever sustenance Allah has provided, he will always be happy."
- Someone asked Imam Reza (a.s) about Contentment with Allah's Wish (*Tawakkal ba khuda)*, The Imam (a.s.) replied, " *Tawakkal* means the conviction that when Allah is with us, there is no reason to be afraid of anything else! We remain contented in all circumstances---whether there are comforts of life available to us or we are faced with hardships! Depending on others than Allah even for small things is termed *Shirk e khafi* or minor hypicricy!"
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said," Shifting a ring from one finger to another as a remembrancer for some task to be done too is a *Shirk-Khafi.* This is so because the person depends on the finger to keep him reminded of his task.
- It is authentically narrated that the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) asked Hazrat Jibrael (a.s.) the meaning of *Tawakkal bar Khuda.* Hazrat Jibrael said, " This means that men should know that they don't have absolute control over the profit or loss in their matters. They can neither give anything nor can they stop anything from changing hands. Therefore, they should stop having expectations about things happening to them. One who does this, will do everything depending on Allah's Will.. He will not expect anything from anybody else. He will be afraid of none else than Allah. Such a person will never envy others for their possessions. With a thankful heart he will receive whatever he gets from Allah. He will have the conviction that whatever Allah does for him, is for his best!"
- Someone asked Bahlool about his condition. Bahlool replied, " Ask him about his condition, on whose orders the universe is rotating! On His orders the earth will stand still and whatever is happening on the earth and the firmament is on His express orders!" Peope said that Bahlool has turned an infidel. Bahlool said, " Listen! The day when I acquired senses, I have entrusted my will to the Creator! I consider His will as mine! Therefore whatever He is doing with His Wish, it is my wish too! But everything that happens is only with His Wish! Whatever Allah has

written in a person's fate, he will certainly get it! However much a person runs away from the sustenance destined for him, he will get it! "

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) has said, " In the view of Allah, forbearance is like the head of a person and the faith is like his body. If there is no forbearance (*Sabr)* in a person, then the faith will remain as a lifeless body!"

ABIDING BY ALLAH'S WILL

- It is authentically narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that whosoever bears with equanimity the hardships and travails of the world will certainly go to the Heaven. One who pursues his carnal desires in the world, will end up in the Hell
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq that when a *momin* is put into the grave, then his prayers (*namaz)* would be on his right, the *Zakat* that he distributed on his left, the good that he had done for his parents and relations near his head and his forbearance on his side. The two angels, *Munkir and Nakeer,* will visit the grave to question the person at this juncture. At this point forbearance addresses its companions *namaz, Zakat and good deeds thus, '*Now is the time to come to the help of our master! If you cannot do it, I shall help him!'
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.), " A time will come when power and pelf will be impossible to achieve without blood-shed. Affluence will not be possible without robbing others and practicing parsimony. Mutual friendship among people will not develop except by abandoning the faith and following the dictates of vile desires. Those of you who remain contented with penury in those times despite having the means of getting rich through foul means, who are troubled by others for following the right path. Allah will Award to such persons reward of fifty truthful ones who bore witness on my behalf!"

TYPES OF FORBEARANCE

- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam that there are three types of forbearance:
  1. Forbearance on the toil undergone in Allah's obedience: One who exercises forbearance in obedience to Allah, Allah will award him six hundred echelons. The distance between two consecutive echelons will be equal to distance between the ends of the earth and the sky.

2. Forbearance in avoidance of commiting sins: One who exercises forbearance in avoiding sins, Allah will award him nine hundred echelons and the distance between two consecuive echelons will be equal to the distance between the earth and the Firmament.
3. Forbearance in bearing hardships and calamities.: One who bears hardships Allah will award three hundred echelons. The distance between two echelons will be equal to the distance between the earth and the sky.

- It is narrated from Imam jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that when a *momin* is afflicted with some difficulty and bears it with equanimity, Allah will give him reward equal to that earmarked for a thousand martyrs.
- It is authentically narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) that on the Day of Judgement when Allah will gather all the creatures at one place, then a herald would announce on His behalf. " Where are those persons who exercised patience and forbearance! " One group of people will come forward. The angels will welcome them and ask them, " In what circumstance did you exercise forbearance?" They will reply, " We exercised forbearance in bearing the hardships in praying to Allah, we bore hardship in avoiding sins!" Then a herald will announce on behalf of Allah," These creatures are thruthful! Let them enter the Heaven in large numbers!"
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) that Hazrat Ali (a.s.) had lot of affection for his slave Hazrat Qanbar. When Hazrat Ali (a.s.) went out, Hazrat Qanbar used to carry a sword in his hand as a measure of protection for his master. One moonlit night Hazrat Ali (a.s.) emerged from his residence. On the way he noticed that Hazrat Qanbar, as usual, was following him. He asked, " Qanbar! Why have you come?" Hazrat Qanbar said, " I have come, lest someone harm you!" Hazrat Ali (a.s) asked him, " Do you intend to protect me from the creatures of the other world or from those on the earth?" Qanbar said, " I can protect you from the creatures that are on the earth!" Hazrat Ali said, " Unless Allah wills, none on this earth can harm me. Go back home in peace!"Hazrat Qanbar went back home as ordered by his master.
- Imam Reza (a.s.) has said, " *Eemaan* (Faith) is one stage more superior than *Islam* (bearing witness to Allah and His Prophet). *Taqwa* (piety) is one stage superior to *Eemaan.* For the progeny of Adam, Allah has not gifted anything more valuable than *Yaqeen* (firm belief)." Someone asked, " What is *Yaqeen* or firm belief?" The Imam (a.s.) said, " Dependence on Allah, implicitly obeying Him, exercising forbearance on what He has Willed for the person and entrusting everything to Allah!"
- The tradition narrated by Hazrat Abu Dharr: " Four traits are found only in *momins*. 1. Quietness: This is the first form of prayer to Allah. 2. Politeness (*Tawazoh*); that is, humility in front of Allah or showing politeness to the creatures of Allah for His sake! 3. In all circumstances remembering and talking about Allah. 4. Bearing with equanimity the paucity of means.
- "O Abu Dharr! Strive for good deeds and virtuous acts, even if you fail to achieve them! This is better than getting your name liasted amongst those who are negligent.

- “ O Abu Dharr! One who keeps control over what lies between the loins and what lies between the jaws from *haram (* illegitimate) acts, will enter the Heaven.
- Abu Dharr asked, “ Ya Hazrat! Do we have to account for what we utter from our tongues?” He (a.s) replied, “ O Abu Dharr! What else will take people to the Hell except the words uttered by them through their tongues! You will be safe till you open your mouth! If you uttered a good thing, you will be rewarded. To the contrary, if you uttered something foul, the record for your punishment will be updated!
- O Abu Dharr! When a person speaks in a meeting and makes them laugh, he will be taken to a stage in the Hell the distance of which will be equal to the distance between the earth and the sky.
- O Abu Dharr! Death and the Hell is for one who talks falsehoods! For him who talks to make others laugh is the Hell. One who kept quiet got his deliverence! Whenever you talk, you must tell the truth. Don’t utter falsehoods from your mouth! Abu Dharr asked, “ What is the penitence for the person who has been lying purposefully?” He (a.s.) replied, “ Repenting over the past untruthfulness and praying five times regularly. This will wash away his sins. A truthful person never misses his mandatory prayers and always abstains from taboo acts. A person, during his prayers, tells ten times to Allah. ‘ *We pray to You and seek only Your succor’*

LIES CONDEMNED

It is evident from innumerable traditions that a lie, whether told in jest or in seriousness, is taboo act. But in certain special circusstances telling the bare truth is not good. Similarly there are circumstances when one must perforce uphold a lie. For example, telling a truth is *haram* when there is the likelihood of harming a *momin* through its utterence. Conversely, if one has to tell a lie to save the life of a *momin,* he must do it. Suppose a *momin* has kept with someone an amount in trust. If a tyrant claims that amount from the person who has been entrusted the safekeeping, then the person can go to the extreme extent of making a false oath that the money is not with him.

- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that when a person speaks the truth, his acts too will be pure and popular.
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) was once sitting under a dilapidated, leaning wall giving a sermon. One person said, “ The wall near which you are seated is dilapidated. It might collapse. The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ Death is the keeper!” When the Imam (a.s.) rose and moved from there, the wall collapsed.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) said, “ The first to bear witness of the truthful person will be Allah! Then He will bear witness that what He says is always the truth!”
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) says, “ The adornment of words is the truth. Tell the truth. The truthful persons are remembered by Allah with the sobriquet of *Sadiqeen!* He is always with the truthful. Save yourselves from falsehood. Falsehood takes one away from the Faith. The truthful is at the threshold of deliverence. The one who lies will be in the abyss of shame and destruction.
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that Allah has provided locks for sins and hypocricy is their key. Telling lies is worst than consuming alcohols.
- Then the Imam (a.s.) said,” Telling lies is tantamount to spoiling one’s faith!”
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) says that telling lies about Allah and his Prophet (a.s.) is a major sin.”
- It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that the first to bear witness about a lier will be Allah. Then will follow the witness of the two angels who keep a record of the words and deeds of every person. In the end the person himself will confess to his lying.
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) said, “ The face of a liar will lose its radiance and good looks!”

CONTENTMENT & OPULENCE

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said, “ O Abu Dharr! Adopt contentment that you raise yourself in the consideration of Allah!” Abu Dharr asked, “ Ya Hazrat! What is *Ghina* or contentment?” the Prophet (a.s.) replied, “ The contented person is one who has two square meals for the day and the night!”

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said, “ O Abu Dharr! One who is happy with the frugal sustenance provided by Allah, Allah will be satisfied with his small acts!”

ABSTAIN FROM UNTRUTHS

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, “One who protects that which lies between his two jaws and that which is between the two loins, Allah will give him a place in the Heaven!” Protection of the tongue consists in abstaining from telling lies. There should be thruth both in the words and deeds of a person.

A man who prays regularly, atleast repeats the following words ten times a day: “ We only worship You and seek help ony from You” As a matter of fact they are not telling the truth because whatever they do, they seek help of persons other than Allah. When they perpetuate any wrong acts, they register the help of the Satan.

Allah curses the liars and befriends the truthful. He exhorts people to join ranks with the truthful. Telling lies is not only an abhorrent act but is also a major sin. Telling a lie even in jest is a sin. But certain times telling lies is permissible. If one can save an innocent person from execution by telling a lie is considered a noble act. In a similar situation, if someone tells the truth and becomes the cause of the killing of an innocent person, then he has committed a major sin. If a rapprochement can be arranged between two litigant *momins* by telling a lie, it can be done.

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that telling lies in three circumstances is not a sin: In the war breaking a covenant with the enemy, lying to one’s own spouse for the purpose of peace at home and trying to establish amicability between two friends who have been fighting.

The Prophet (a.s.) also said, “ The biographies of kings (*Shah-nameh*), tales of the Fire Worshippers, stories of Laila Majnoon etc, although true, should not be read or retold.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) narrates from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that ‘talking of Ali (a.s) is prayer. This, because talking of him is like talking of me; and talking of me is like talking of Allah. And talking of Allah is prayer in itself!’

Someone asked Imam Jafar e Sadiq about the stories told by the mendicants. The Imam (a.s.) replied, “ When one gives ears to the teller of the tales, he is in a way worshipping him! If the person is talking about Allah, then it will be the worship of Allah. If the person talks about the Satan or false things, then the listener would be worshipping the Satan!”

CHAPTER : 13

THE STATUS

1.BACKBITING CONDEMNED

All schools of thoughts in Islam are united on condemning back-bitiing as a *haram* act. It is proved beyond doubt through authentic traditions that the Prophet of Islam (a.s) has termed backbiting as a major sin worst than adultery.

Backbiting is more nefarious than adultery. If a person commits adultery and expresses his compunction wholeheartedly, Allah might pardon him. But backbiting is an unpardonable sin. The only way out for the backbiter is that the person about whom he carried tales himself pardons him.
Abusing a Muslim is impiety, fighting with him is infidelity but backbiting against him is like eating the flesh of one's own brother. This is tantamount to disobedience to Allah.

- It is authentically reported from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that, " If a person carries the tales of a *momin,* that he had witnessed or heard, his position will be as stated by Allah, ' *Innal lazeena yuhibboona an tashihal faheshsato fil-lazeena aamanu lahum azaabun aleem* – chapter 24, verse 19- Those who like to reveal the failings of the Faithful, they have severe chastisment in store for them"
- Backbiting destroys the faith of a Muslim as leprosy disintegrates the body from inside.
- Awaiting the arrival of the time of the next congregation in the mosque is an act of virtue, if one doesnot indulge in backbiting about others in the meantime.
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that. " If a person narrates the doings of a *momin* to others with a purpose of belittling him, Allah will remove this backbiter from his guardianship and transfer him to the guardianship of the Satan. Satan willingly accepts the charge of such a person!"
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s) that a person who has faith in the Day of Judgement, he should not sit in a company where there is talk against the Infallible members of the Prophet (a.s)'s Family and also there is a practice of backbiting against *momins.* When a person prevents others from backbiting, Allah will remove from him a thousand difficulties. If the person quietly listens to backbiting and doesn't intervene on behalf of the absent person, he will himself become a party to the sin of backbiting. This sin will be seventy times more severe than the sin of the person who was actually doing the backbiting.
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that one who backbites against a *momin*, although he may have no enmity against the person, the progeny of such backbiter will have the Satan's share in it.
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) says that when someone talks against a *momin* with the purpose of putting him to disrepute, Allah will place him in such a station on the Day of Judgement where there

will be accumulation of the scum of the adulterers' semen. He will remain there till he receives a pardon.

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " Abstain from carrying false notions against others. This is the biggest weakness. . Move in the way of Allah as brothers.. Allah ordains thus:' … and don't call one another with bad names. Don't search others' faults. Don't use abusive language while conversing. Don't do backbiting. Abstain from fights. Don't hate or be jealous of others. Remember, jealousy eats away faith the same way as the fire consumes the dried wood!'"
- In another narrative the Prophet (a.s.) says, " Allah sent a Revelation to Prophet Moses (a.s.), ' If a backbiter repents, he will be the among the last to enter the precincts of the Heaven. If he doesn't repent his act, he will be amongst the first to be sent to the Hell!'"
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " Four persons are such that their torture would even cause pain to the people of the Hell. The *Hameem* of the Hell will be there for them to feed on. They will raise lots of wails. The people of the Hell would complain that despite their own pain, they are raising noise and disturbing them the more. Some of them will be hanging on the sarcophagus of the Hell. They will be pulling out the innards of each other. From the mouths of others pus and blood will flow out. Some others will snatch the flesh from their own bodies and eat. The people of the Hell will inquire about those hanging on to the sarcophagus and will be told that at the time of their death they owed lot of money to others. They did not leave behind anything to settle others' dues. They will then inquire about those who were pulling at each other's innards. They will be told that these were the people who eased themselves anywhere not bothering about anyone. When they inquired about the persons who were oozing pus and blood from their mouths; they will be told that they were the persons who were in the habit of backbiting and carrying tales.
- The companions of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) asked him about the meaning of the tradition of the Prophet (a.s.), " A *momin's* woman is taboo for another *momin."* The Imam replied, " revealing a *momin's* secret is *haram.* The fast and the ablution of a backbiter goes void.. One who recounts the failings of others, himself has many failings.
- Hazrat Ameer al Mimineen (a.s) has asked people to refrain from backbiting. This habit is the fodder of the dogs of the Hell.

2. MEANING OF BACKBITING

Talking about a *momin* in a tone that would hurt him , if he were around, and heard you talk, is tantamount to backbiting.

Even if this backbiting is in gestures and and subtle indications, it is taboo. However if the name of the person is not mentioned and only said that in the city there is a person who has such and such a bad habit, then it will not be termed backbiting. But if certain traits are attributed to a person in his absence, and, in fact, he doesn't manifest those traits, then the act is backbiting and is taboo. In fact this would be an allegation much worse than backbiting.

3.JUSTIFICATION FOR BACKBITING

There are ten situations in which backbiting is justified

1. When a tyrant oppresses someone and the oppressed persons seeks help from another person in authority by informing him of the oppression he has suffered at the hands of the tyrant.
2. Recounting the faults of a person to someone else with the solemn hope that this way the faults of the person could be corrected.
3. While applying for an edict (*fatwa)* mentioning the name of the other party. For example, informing to the jurist the name of a brother who is denying to him his just rights.
4. If a *momin* takes the advice of another *momin* whether he can entrust his valuables to a particular person and that whether that person, in his opinion, can be depended upon.
5. Revealing the hypocritic acts of the hypocrites that can harm the society is justified.
6. If a jurist (*mujtahid)* points out the *khata e mujtahidi (* error of judgement) of another *mujtahid,* it is permissible.
7. Arguing about the veracity or otherwise of narrators of events is permitted.
8. When people are told about a particular failing of a person and they don't agree, then highlighting that defect as an explanation is justified. For example, someone says about a person that he is volubly talkative!
9. If a group of persons is compulsively commiting the same mistake, then it is permissible to talk about their failings. .
10. When a culprit is arraigned in front of a magistrate for repeated commitment of crimes, then it is justified to recount his foul acts in the court.

3. GIVING EAR TO BACKBITING

One who listens to backbiting is a sinner as much as the one who carries the tales. Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) has said, " The one who gives ears to backbiting is one of the two backbiters!" It is a common saying that one should discourage

backbiting. If one fails to achieve this, then he should discreetly walk away from the place.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said, " One who prevents people from backbiting against brother *momins* and helps them, Allah will save him from the travails of this world and the Hereafter."

Imam Jafar e Sadiq has said, " If someone is, whom we donot know, backbites about a *momin,* we should not belittle the *momin.* Who knows he may be the righteous one!"

5.EXPIATION FOR BACKBITING

The expiation for backbiting is that one should seek the pardon of those against whom he has committed the act and try to remove the rancor from their hearts.

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said that backbitring is a sin worse than adultery. People asked the reason for this. The Prophet (a.s.) replied, " If one repents having committed adultery, Allah might pardon the person. But repentence for having done backbiting is not accepted till the person who was the victim of the act does not forgive the perpetrator." Also the Prophet (a.s.) said, " If a person whose backbiting has been done is not aware of the act, even then the person who has talked about him should personally seek his forgiveness. If, in the meantime, the victim dies, the backbiter will not be pardoned at all."

6.FALSE ALLEGATIONS CONDEMNED

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said that, " if someone makes a false allegation against a *momin* or a *momina,* and relates a thing about them that is not true, such a person would be made to stand on a hill of fire on the Day of Judgement.

Someone asked Hazrat ameer al Momineen (a.s.), " What is the distance between truth and falsehood!" The Imam (a.s.) replied, " Only the width equivalent to the width of four fingers! He told this putting his four fingers between his ear and the eye. Then added," What you see with your eye is the truth and most of what you hear through your ear might be the falsehood!"

One who tells falsehoods about brother *momins* to belittle them, Allah will shame him in this world and the Hereafter!

Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s) made a will that people should keep away from those who make false allegations about others. Their company might make others adopt their nefarious habit.

The Prophet of Allah (a.s) has said, “ One who keeps company ofpeople who tell falsehoods, might himself be in the same habit.

7.JEALOUSY

Jealousy is among the worst psychological sins. This is the first sin that Satan committed against Hazrat Adam (a.s). Jealousy is one of the major sins. The jealous person wishes harm to the subject of his feelings. If he feels that he should attain the same status as the other person has, then it can be termed as the spirit of competition that is permissible. When a jealous person wishes that the status of his subject of jealousy diminishes, it may not happen because all privileges are a gift from Allah.. Jealousy against what Allah has given to some will be tantamount to confronting Him! The jealous person, therefore, will be sad and dejected because of this pernicious habit.

Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) has said, “ Don’t be jealous. Jealousy eats away the Faith as the fire devours the dry wood!”

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) has said, “ A *momin* has recourse to the spirit of competition (*Ghibta)* and not jealousy. In *Ghibta* there is no element of wishing diminishing of the other person’s status but the wish to equal him or even surpass him in his achievements. “

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s) has said, “ Heaven is taboo for the *nammam (* the backbiter), carrier of tales and the jealous!”

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, “ O Abu Dharr! One who is a hypocrite and tale carrier in this world , he will be in the Hell on the Day of Reckoning. A hypocrite is one who praises the person on his face and belittles him in his absence.”

“ O Abu Dharr! Every secret that a brother *momin* has confided to you in private, revealing it to others is dishonesty. Abstain from revealing it. If you don’t guard the secret of a brother *momin,* he too might not uphold your secrets!”

8.THE TALEBEARER

A talebearer will never enter the Heaven and will not have any relief from the tortures of the Hell.

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, “ Those who have made it their habit to gossip and carry tales, create enmity amongst good friends, and allege failings in others that are not there, are the worst of men. Heaven is taboo for such persons.” Then the Prophet (a.s.) added, “ Four types of people will be denied

the Heaven: 1. Soothsayers or wizards. 2. Hypocrites. 3. Alcoholics. 4. Talebearers.

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) narrates that three categories of persons will not go to the Heaven. 1. Those who shed the blood of Muslims. 2. Those who take intoxicants. 3. The talebearers.
- It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) that on the night of *Meraj* he saw a woman whose head was like that of a pig and the body akin to one of a monkey. She was victim to a thousand hardships. The companions asked the Prophet (a.s), " Ya Hazrat! Why the hardships visited the woman?" He (a.s) replied, " She was a talecarrier and perpetrater of untruths!"
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s) has said, " Very bad is the person who has two opinions and two words! He praises one on his face and condemns him behind his back! He will be jealous when given something and run away in times of difficulty.!"
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s) has said, " A twofaced person will come on the Day of Judgement with a face having a second tongue in the back of his head. One of the tongues will be hanging in front of his head. Flames will be emanating from both the tongues. The fire will then enter his entire body. A herald will announce that this was the same person who adoped two tongues and faces in the world!"
- Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s) has said, " Three types of persons will be under the shadow of the Firmament on the Day of Judgement, when there will be no other shade than this: 1. A person who arranges marriages of unmarried *momins.* 2. One who provides a servant for a brother *momin. 3. One who keeps the secrets of* momins.. Remember keeping others' secrets is very important."
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s) has said, " Keep good relations with your friends lest they become your enemies someday. Don't exceed in the enmity with your enemies. Perhaps they might become your good friends someday!"
- "O Abu Dharr! The acts of people committed between a Friday to the next are recounted to Allah on the following weednesday and Thursday. Allah pardons the sins of all barring those have carried enmity against their brothers. Allah orders to keep their deeds in abeyance till they reach a rapprochement and the enmity is banished."
- "O Abu Dharr! Abstain from keeping a distance from your brother! Because of creating distances, no action will be acceptable to Allah! O Abu Dharr! I warn you against creating distances! If circumstance force separation, let it not be for more than three days! One who keeps away for more than three days from his brother *momin,* and dies in that period, then the Hellfire will be more appropriate for him!"
- An authentic source quotes from the Prophet of Islam (a.s), " One who has more cares and sorrow will be sickly. One who carries a bad character, will be the accursed. One who fights and argues with people will lack humanness and thoughtfulness. " Then the Prophet (a.s) added, " Jibrael (a.s) has always been

warning me against litigation the same way that he warned against drinking and idolatory!"

- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.), " As long as two Muslims remain at loggerheads, Satan will remain happy. When they reach a rapprochement, the Satan's knees crumble! He then complains, ' What a calamity has struck me!'"
- The Imam (a.s.) also said, " *Sadaqa* (charity) is very dear to Allah. That is, arranging a rapprochement between warring groups Arranging a truce between two fighting men is a better charity than giving away two gold coins in alms.!"

9.PRIDE

- "O Abu Dharr! The maximum number of people who will go to the Hell will be from those who are victims of pride! Someone asked, " Ya Hazrat! What is the way of protecting oneself from becoming proud?" The Prophet (a.s) replied, " A person who wears coarse cloth, rides on the long eared mules, milks his own goats and shares his food with the poor and prefers to carry his own burden is free from the trait of pride!" This means that humility protects one from becoming proud.
- "O Abu Dharr! One who makes his robe trail behind him in pride, Allah will not cast the look of Blessing towards him on the Day of Reckoning!"One who draws the ends of his robe in his hands and walsk on the street, and doesn't walk like the proud, conceited Arabs , who repairs his own footwear and bows his Head to Allah on the sands is free from the trait of false pride!
- ' Very soon " the Prophet (a.s) said, " My *Ummat* will have people who will be born in affluence. They will be pampered with delicious foods and victuals. Flattering poets will sing paens in their praise. These will be the bad ones among my *Ummat!*"

CHAPTER :14

MASABEEH—THE LAMPS

1.CONDEMNING PRIDE

The Satan was the first to commit this sin when he refused to prostrate to Adam expressing his pride that he was made of the superior fire and Adam was made with the lowly soil.

Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) has said in his Sermon (*Qutba e Qasa-aa)* after a thosand praises to Allah Who Has given great importance to His Traits of Respect and Greatness. He has kept these traits only for Himself. And made *haram (*taboo) for others creatures of His. Whosoever from His creatures assumes these traits, he will be the accursed!

In the first instance Allah tested the angels. He said, " I am creating a human with the lowly soil. When I put spirit in the creature, you must all prostrate to him in respect!

All the angels prostrated before Adam as commanded by Allah, barring the proud Satan. He said, " Adam is made of soil and you have made me with the superior fire!. Therefore, I am superior to him!" By the Creator of all beings! Satan became the leader of all the pride and conceited beings in the universe! He became the accursed of Allah forever by this attitude! If Allah wished, he could create Adam with such a light that even the angels would be put in a shade before him! For Allah doing such a thing was very easy, but He wished to put the angels to test! If the angels were awed by Adam's *noor (light)* and prostrated, then it would be the prostration under the influence of the light and , perhaps, not in obedience to Allah's Commandment. .

Allah wanted to test the angels, and test them in such a way that the obedient and the disobedient were clearly distinguished from each other. Therefore, *Iblees,* who spent six thousand years in supplication to Allah, was turned into Satan for his disobedience and turned away from the Heaven. He was the first proud creature who misled *Qabeel* to act against Allah's Commandment and kill his *momin* brother *Habeel* only out of jealousy and pride.

Therefore, one must abstain from pride. People should take a lesson from those who are buried under heavy loads of soil. They were those who were very proud and never considered anyone equal to them. If pride was considered by Allah a desirable trait in humans, , He would not have kept his Prophets (a.s.) devoid of it.. The Great Allah likes his *Abd e Zaleel* (the lowly creature) to prostrate their foreheads on the dust as a test of their Obedience.

Wealth and pelf are great evils and penury and piety the supreme tests. Allah tests the proud people through these weak and insignificant creatures.

Hazrat Moosa (a.s) and Hazrat Haroon (a.s) reached the court of the Pharoh wearing coarse wollen raiment and carrying a staff. They told Pharoh that if he wished to have peremanent respectability and desired to rule for long, then he should embrace Islam. Hearing this Pharoh laughed and told to his

courtiers that the two mendicants who neither had good dress nor pompous appearance, hold a beggar's staff in th hand , offer him eternal life and respectability! If they have so much power, then why they are not rulers and kings? They even don't wear bracelets of gold!

It became evident from the talk of the Pharo that in his consideration wealth, pelf and bracelets etc were signs of respectability and power. If Allah has attached any importance to these things, he certainly would have provided all these to His Prophets (a.s.) But the Intention of Allah was to test the proud, conceited rulers of the world through His Prophets (a.s.) who were the paragons of simplicity and humility. If the prophets were rich and powerful, people would have respected them for their outward pomp. But Allah wished to see who were his sincere creatures. Similarly Allah built His House with ordinary stones and sand. It was possible for Him to Order it to be made with gold, silver and precious stones. That would perhaps have put the pride of the world to a shade! But the Creator wanted people of all shades of power and pride to bow down to His Humble Abode!

The philosophy of *Salah* too is the same. Proud and conceited persons prostrate their foreheads on the dust in acknowledgement of the Greatness of Allah. Wealthy persons fast in the Holy month of Ramadhan to earn the Goodwill of Allah!

They take out and distribute the *Zakat* thinking that Allah has gifted them with wealth and it must be shared with the needy. Although the *House of Allah* is in an isolated and desolate place, but since it is related with the great Creator, people have to respect the Black Stone (*Hajr e Aswad)* in obedience to His Commands!

2.THE TYPES OF PRIDE

The proud consider themselves big and powerful. There are several categories of these men of pride

The pride that touches the borders of infidelity when the proud person belittles the prophets, the men of piety, the scholars and the abstemious. Such proud persons build grand mansions for themselves, wear expensive raiment and ride on pedigree steeds to make a show of their wealth to the people. They will have a fleet of slaves and servants hovereing around them. All these things are the concomitants of the pride of the person.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) has said that the man of false pride is one who has no knowledge of the truth and belittles and looks down upon the men of truth.

One person asked the Imam (a.s.),” Ya Hazrat! I live in a decent house, eat good food, I use a horse for my traveling and a slave accompanies me on my visits out. . Are all these the signs of pride?”

The Imam (a.s) asked him, “ Are you doing all this to show-off to the people?” “ Definitely not!” the man replied. The Imam (a.s.) rejoined, “ Then it is not pride! Pride is that which makes one forget the truth and makes him belittle the truthful ones. If a person has this pride to the extent of the size of a sesame seed, he will not be able to enter the precincts of the Heaven!”

- The Prophet of Allah (a.s) once passed through a place where lots of people were gathered. He enquired why such a large assemblage of people had gathered there. He was told that a mad person lived in the neighborhood and people have come out of curiosity to see him. The Prophet (a.s) said, “ He is neither mad nor deranged. The person is sick. In fact, mad are those people who think that others are abnormal and make a curiosity out of them. Making a jest of such sick persons, they are ridiculing God’s will!
- In another tradition the Prophet of Allah (a.s) says, “ When my *Ummat* walks in misplaced pride, and walks with a proud gait with the slaves from Persia and Rome in attendance, then there will appear war and fighting amongst them”
- Then the Prophet (a.s) added, “ The fragrance of the Heaven will travel to a distance equal to the length traveled in one thousand years, but those who are disobedient to their parents, who deny others’ rights, who are adulterers, who have their coat tails trailing behind them in pride, who harm others with cunning, who brag about small mercies shown to others and who are victims of avarice will not be able to smell.”
- In another tradition the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) says, “ One who has constructed grand mansions more than necessary for his use, just to make the show of his riches to others, Allah will convert these mansions as a fiery ring and tie to the neck of the proud person. Then the person will be consigned to the Hell with the fiery ring around his neck.”
- The prophet then said, “ A person who shows off wearing expensive raiment, Allah will keep him in the lower echelons of the Hell in the company of Qaroon. Qaroon was the first person who expressed pride over his wealth and was interred into the land!”
- A person who beats a beggar or considers him inferior, Allah will raise him on the Day of Judgement in the size of an ant and consign him to the Hellfire!”

3.THE CURE FOR PRIDE

The cure for the ailment of pride is that one always keeps in view his beginning, the inevitable end, his weaknesses, his failings, failures, illnesses and hardships faced during the lifetime.

- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said that he wondered at the person born out of insignificant seed, destined to die and putrify in the end, behaves during the lifetime with a huge degree of pride!
- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s) has wondered over the person who started in the form of a drop and ends up with the final funeral bath! His body throughout his life serves as a container for urine and feces. Even then the person behaves with a high degree of pride. One who wishes to banish the trait of pride from himself, he should eat his meals with his servant, milk his goats with his own hands, sit in the company of beggars and abstain from the company of the affluent!"

4.REFORMING THE ESOTERIC SELF (BAATIN)

Man should search his inner self while he tries to mind his external appearances. The aim should be to ensure that both his outward and inward self is pure and good. Like the *Sufis,* spoiling one's outward appearance in consonance with the condition of the esoteric self is haram or taboo. Commiting a sin in the open is worse than doing it in private..Confronting a superior will bring more of his displeasure than privately planning against him and talking ill of him at his back.. The Islamic Shariah doesn't permit such acts. It is said in the Holy Quran, " Allah doesn't like criticizing anyone on his face or in the open. But the oppressed can criticize the oppressor."- Chapter 6, verse 1.

WEARING THE WOOLEN BLANKETS

Using wollen blankets as raiment has received lots of praise in the Sunni literature. In certain Shia traditions this practice is condemned and in certain others it has been praised. Perhaps the traditions praising this practice has an element of *Taqiyyah.* If the raiment of woolen blanket is worn at the time of prayer, or to manifest one's humility, or to prevent oneself from the effect of the cold weather, then there is no

problem. But always wearing such dress as a personal mark of identification is not proper.

- It is narrated from Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) that one should wear dress made out of cotton. This was the preference of the Prophet of Allah (a.s) and the *Ahl al Bayt (a.s.).* The Prophet (a.s) never wore leather headgear unless it was absolutely necessary due to the weather conditions.
- The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " I shall not abandon five things till the time of my death that they remain as part of my *Sunnat:* 1. Sitting on the floor and eating my meals with the slaves. 2. Riding on the long eared mules with stirrup and halter. 3. Milking the goats with my own hands. 4. Wearing the raiment made of wool. 5. Taking precedence in wishing the children."
- " O Abu Dharr! In the last days of this world people will wear wollen raiment both during the warm and cool seasons as a mark of status. However, the angels on the land and in the Heaven will curse them for doing this. The people deserving of the Heaven will be in dusty dresses, disheveled hair and getting scant attention from those around them. If these persons pray to Allah for anything, Allah shall grant their wish.
- The Prophet of Allah (A.S.), being in the know of the hidden things said that after him there will be people who will adopt stealth and deceit and involve others in hypocricy and waywardness.. Therefore the Prophet (a.s) said, " People who adopt that garb are the accursed. Don't be misled by their subterfuge.!" This is also one of the miracles of the Prophet that he had forecast the doings of the group before it appeared on the scene and condemned it. One who denies the fact of the group of *Sufia* being wayward, will deserve the curse of Allah and his Prophet (a.s.).. It is not only the wearing of the blanket that is a curse for them, but the main cause is their interference with the *Shariah.* Their wont is to adopt the ways of infidels and heretics (*Zanadeeq)* and abandoning the *Shariah.* With their innovations they divert the people from the right path.
- There are several other traditions that condemn the group of *Sufia.* The Shia scholars have always condemned the *sufi* cult. Some have even written treatises on the condemnation of these sects. For example, Ali bin Babawiyah, whose letters on the matters of *Shariah* used to reach Hazrat *Saheb al Asr (a.s)* and he used to receive prompt replies too. Also his son, Mohammed bin Ali bin Babawiyah, who is the doyen of Shia traditionists, has received the commendation of Janab *Saheb*

al Asr (a.s.). He has written a voluminous book reproving the *Sufi* cult.

- Sheik Toosi, Mulla Hilli and Sheik Shaheed too have written tomes in condemnation of the cult. Sheik Ali has written a book, *Mataan Mujramiah*, condemning the *Sufi* cult. His son Hassan too wrote his book, *Umdat al Miqaal ,* on the same subject. Jaffar bin Mohammed Dooresti in his book, *Aeteqaad,* has convincingly dealt with the *Sufi cult.* Ibne Hamza and Sayed Murtada Raazi too have written extensively on the subject. Maulana Ahmed Ardbeel has condemned the sect very convincingly in his writings.
- Friends! Why do you rate this sect well? This, despite the Prophet (a.s) and the Ahl al Bayt having condemned them in very clear terms. Will you claim that you are a follower of Hassan Basri? He was a person who has been the butt of many an authentic tradition! Or you will term yourself the follower of Sufian Suri who was a mortal enemy of Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.). Or will you toe the line of Ghazali who was an outright *naasibi*. He writes in his book that the way in which Ali Murtada (a.s) is an Imam, he too is one in his own right! He writes that whoever curses Yazid is a sinner. He has written several books against the Shias in the genre of '*Al Mutaqaddameen az Zalaal.* Or will you project his brother, Ahmed Ghazali, as proof that he believes the accursed Satan is amongst the chiefs of the pious (*the aulia)!* Or will you adopt maulana Rumi as your intercessor that he says Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s) will intercede on behalf of the accursed Ibn e Muljim and guide him into the Heaven? He says that Ibne Mulji has not committed any sin and that what he had done was the destiny!
- There is no page of the *mathnavi* of Maulana Rumi on which he has not written about the futility of prayer and the depraved beliefs. His followers believe that hearing to tambourine, harmonica and fiddle is a type of prayer.
- Will you make Mohiuddin Arabi your symbol that who has given pride of place to meaningless beliefs in his book.. He says that the saints (*Aulia)* are a group of people to whom the *Rafizis* look like pigs. He also says that when he went for the *Meraj* he found that the status of Ali (a.s) on the Firmament was lesser than that of Othman, Omer and Abu Bakra! He says that when he came back, he told to Ali (a.s) that he claimed in the world that he was better than the other three then how is it that his status in the Firmament was lesser than the three of them!
- There are several other such canards, writing about them will unnecessarily lengthen the narrative.. Therefore, one should

not be misled by their talk. What all they have done is to get worldly benefits. These people claimed that they visit the Firmament ten times in a night but are incapable of throwing light on simple questions of *fiqh*!

- It is narrated from Hazrat Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that the sign of an imposter is that he will give you news about the frmament, the east and the west lucidly. But when asked about the legitimate (*Halal)* and taboo (*Haram)* he will draw a blank! He claims that he has understood the intricacies of *Wahdat al Wajood* (the Unity of God) that other erudite scholars have not been able to ! But he has not understood a simple fact that has been explained to him umpteen times. These people say that *kashf* (manifestation) and *kufr (*infidelity) are not antithetical and can be always clubbed together! They believe that there have been practitioners of *Kashf* amongst the non-believers in India. Suppose their *kashf* is a reality and not a hypocrisy, then what superiority they have achieved by adopting it! . They have remained infidels and shall be infidels till the Day of Reckoning!
- It is written in the *Ehtejaaj* of Tabrisi that once Ameer al Momineen (a.s) passed through the place of Hassan Basri. The person was performing the ablution. Hazrat Ali (a.s) said, " O Hassan! Do the ablution properly!" He said, " Ya Ameer al Mimineen! Yesterday you have killed the persons who used to do the ablution thoroughly! Today you are asking me to do the ablution properly!"The Imam asked him, " Why didn't you turn up to help them?" He replied, " By Allah! In the morning I took bath. Rubbed camphor on my body and took my arms that I hadn't the slightest doubt about opposition to Ayesha is infidelity. On the way I heard a sound saying,' Where are you going! Return back! Those who kill and get killed will all go to the Hell!' I was scared of that herald and returned home. The next day again I got ready to go to the help of Ayesha. I again heard the same voice and returned home!" The Imam (a.s.) said, " You are telling the truth! Do you know who the person was who called you?" Hassan said, " No! I don't know!" The Imam (a.s.) said," He was your brother, the Satan! He has told you the truth that the those who kill and also those who get killed from the troops of Ayesha will go tto the Hell!"
- In another tradition it is narrated from Hazrat Ameer al Momineen that he said to Hassan Basri," Every time there is a *Samiri* (magician) and you are the *Samiri* of your time!"
- Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s) has said, " O Hassan Basri! Whether you go the East or to the West, you will not acquire any knowledge! The only source of knowledge are we the *Ahl al Bayt.!" Remember, this Hassan Basri is the same person*

who is the chief of the Sufis. *The* Sufis associate themselves with him very ardently. They mostly quote from him. They narrate that one big sheik was Ibad Basri . He used to ridicule Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s) and used to criticize him in the matter of Jehad.

- Once a group consisting of Ayub Sajistani, Saleh Marni, Utba, Habib Farsi, Malik bin Dinar, Abu Saleh aami, Jafar bin Suleiman Rabia and Saadana started from Basra for the Haj. Those days there was scarcity of water in Mecca. The entire gathering in *Khana e Kaaba* prayed for rains. But the prayers were not answered. In the meantime, Imam Zain al Abedeen arrived there with a sad mein. After circumambulating the Kaaba he asked everyone assembled there to move away from the Kaaba. Then he prostrated near the Kaaba and prayed. Before his prayer was over, the clouds gathered and rained so hard that the scarcity turned into plenty! Remember, the names of the persons from the group of Basrans are all the chiefs of the *Sufi* cult! They were not the adherents of the Imam (a.s.) of the time! One of the group was Tawoos Yamani whose debates with Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s) are well known.!
- Sheik Toosi writes in his book, *Ghaibat*, that some people falsely claimed the vicegerency of Hazrat *Saheb al Asr (*a.s.). They were discredited and ridiculed. If they were really the vicegerents of the Imam (a.s) then they could have shown miracles as did the *Saheb al Asr (*a.s.). The first such imposter was *Shariyi* who got ridicule after making the claim. Hazrat *Saheb al Asr* issued an edict refuting his claim. The Sheik says that *Talakbari* said that it became evident to people that the imposter was an infidel. First he used to spread canard about the Imam (a.s) to attract the ignorant people. Progressing in his foul acts in this manner he progressed into believing in the *Hallajia* cult in the manner of persons like Abu Jaffer Shalmafani.The Sheik adds that besides other imposters, Hussain bin Mansoor too was prominent amongst them.
- It is narrated from Hibtullah bin Mohammed Katib that Sahl bin Ismail Naubhakti, who was an ardent Shia, sent word to Mansoor Hallaj that he would become his follower on condition that he should show a miracle by making his hair permanently black. He said that he had to perforce dye his hair every Friday for the purpose of visiting his slave girls and the exercise was very tedious for him. When Hallaj heard this, he said that Sahl has made a mistake asking him to perform such a miracle. Sahl used to repeat the story everywhere and make people laugh at Hallaj!
- It is mentioned in *Ehtejaj* of Tabrisi that the edict of hazrat *Saheb al Asr* was issued through Hussain bin Rooh

condemning the group that was headed by Husain bin Mansoor Hallaj. Such people were always adversarial to the *Ahl al Bayt.* The Shia chroniclers in that period, and the period following immediately after that, always expressed dislike of the group and gave sufficient proof of their infidelity. Even then if some people abandoned the rightful path of the *Ahl al Bayt,* the sin definitely goes to their account!

CHAPTER: 15

INVOCATIONS

1.THE SUPERIORITY OF INVOCATIONS

The superiority of Tasbeehat or Sanctification of Allah

It is narrated from Imam Hassan (a.s) that a group of Jews came to the presence of the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) and their chief inquired about several religious matters and got satisfactory replies. The entire group embraced Islam. One of the questions asked by the Jew was about the words that were taught to Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) at the time of the construction of the Kaaba. The Prophet told him the pharse was as follows:

"Subhan Allahi walhamdu Lillahi wa la ilaha il Allaho wallaho Akbar"

The Jew asked, " What rewards one could get if he recites this phrase regularly?"

The Prophet of Allah said, " When the sanctfier says 'Subhan Allah', then the angels under the Firmament too will repeat 'Subhan Allah'. And the reciter will get ten times more reward. When the person says'Alhamdu lillah', then Allah rewards him with the world and the Hereafter. These are the words that will be on the mouth of the people who enter the precincts of the Heaven because they used to recite the same words while on the earth. When the person says, 'La ilaha il Allah', Allah orders awarding to him a place in the Heaven for uttering these words, because 'Hal jazaal ehsan illal ehsaan'. When the Jewish scholar heard this, he said, " O Mohammed! You tell the truth!"

- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) said, " A group of beggars came to the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) and said, ' Ya Rasool Allah (a.s.)! The affluent have money and they can perform the Haj. We don't have the means to fulfill this important tenet! They have slaves, whom they can free to earn Allah's goodwill. We can't do that. They have wealth that they can do charity. We cannot be charitable! They can go for Jehad, we cannot do that!' The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) replied,' One who repeats the words " Allaho Akbar" a hundred times, he will get the reward equal to that for releasing a hundred slaves. One who repeats the words "Subhan Allah" a hundred times he will get the reward for a Haj in which a hundred camels had been offered as sacrifice by him.. One who repeats the words "Al hamdu Lillah" a hundred times, he will get the reward for a Jehad for which he had donated a hundred steeds.. When a person repeats the words 'La ilaha il Allah" a hundred times, the reward will be the maximum.' This news reached the affluent people and they too started reciting the words. The beggars came back to the Prophet (a.s) and said, " O Prophet of Allah! The rich too have started doing the same as you have asked us to do!' The Prophet (a.s) replied, ' This is Allahs Bounty! He can give to whoever He wishes to !'"
- Imam Reza (a.s.) has said, " One who recites a hundred times each of the following words,' Alhamdulillah' 'Subhan Allah' 'La ilaha il Allah' and says the Durood 'Allahu ma salle ala Mohammedin wa aale Mohammed' a hundred times, and later on says ' Alla humma zawwijni min al hoor il ain', Allah will grant him the Hoor al Ain in the Heaven. These five hundred words will be the *Mehr (*alimony) for the Hoor al Ain. This is the reason why 500 Deenar is fixed as the alimony for the *momina* women!"

THE REWARD FOR TAHLEEL OR DECLARATION OF ALLAH'S UNITY

The Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has said, " Allah told to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) that if whatever is there on the earth and the sky is put in one pan of a balance and in the other the words 'La ilaha il Allah' are put, the pan in which these words are put

will tilt to its side'.. And said, ' Reciting these words when one takes his last breaths would be of immense advantage that the spirit would leave the body with ease.'

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said, " The more these words are recited, the more one will earn Rewards.. This is an invocation whose superiority is immeasurable. Every prayer has an end. When the five mandatory prayers are offered, ones duty has been done! But there is no limit to the recitation of 'La ilaha il Allah'. One can recite it, however much he wishes to do it. Then the Imam recited the following verse,' Ya ayyuhal lazeena aamanu azkur Allaha dikran kateeraun wa sabbehuhu bukrataun wa aseela- Al Ahzab verse 41. (O believers! Talk of Allah a lot and do His invocation day and night.'"
- Imam Reza (a.s.) has said that Allah told to Hazrat Nooh (a.s.) that when his ark was engulfed in high tide, he should recite the following words a thousand times," La ilaha il Allah" The Imam also said that the recitation of these words will ward away penury and hardship and also relieves one from the pressures of the grave. One who regularly recites these words everyday, Allah will pardon his five thousand sins. It will be like completing the recitation of the Quran twelve times that day'
- Therefore, bearing witness to the Unity of Allah by reciting, " Ashaduan la ilaha il Allah" is a very important invocation and will be the cause of ones deliverence.
- It is authentically narrated that once Hazrat Jibrael (a.s.) came to Hazrat Yusuf (a.s.) to the upper chamber of his royal palace. He noticed a wayfarer in tatters on the street. Hazrat Jibrael said, " O Prophet of Allah (a.s.)! Do you know who that person is?" Hazrat Yusuf (a.s.) said, " Please tell me who he is?" Hazrat Jibrael said that the person was the one who bore witness to your innocence!' Hearing this, Hazrat Yusuf (a.s.) asked his men to fetch the persaon to his presence. When the person was brought up, Hazrat Yusuf treated him with great deference, ordered his men to give him a nice bath , dress him in expensive raiment and provide to him a chamber in the palace to live in and get him married to a beautiful lass.. When all this was accomplished as per the wish of Hazrat Yusuf (a.s.), the person went away from there in a state of happiness. Hazrat Jibrael then said, " O Prophet of Allah(a.s.)! How ungrateful is the human being that if he bears witness to the Unity of Allah from the depths of his heart, Allah would give him palaces in the Heaven, delicious food and *Hoor al Ain* to consort with! When a creature of Allah could give all this to a person for bearing witness to his innocence, then no doubt the words " Ashaduan la ilaha il Allahu" are the key to the Heaven!"

THE SUPERIORITY OF ADHKAR OR INVOCATIONS

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates, " Whoever utters the words "La ilaha il Allah", Allah will creat a rooster that will hover over his head till the Day of Judgement and keep invoking Allah and the reward for that would go to the person.
- The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said, " Ask your people on the verge of death to recite "La ilaha il Allah", one whose last utterence are these words will certainly land in the Heaven."
- It is narrated from Imam Reza (a.s.) that when hazrat Nooh (a.s.) boarded the ark, Allah sent to him a Revelation, ' When you feel the fear of ship wreck, recite these words a thousand times, " La ilaha il Allah".
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that whoever recites a hundred times the words " La ilaha il Allahul maalikal haqqaul mubeen", Allah would save him from penury and he will be provided safety from the pressures of the grave. In this life he will become affluent.
- It is narrated in another tradition that one who recites this invocation 32 times, will take a turn towards prosperity.. Penury and difficulties would desert him. He will be knocking at the threshold of the Heaven..
- An authentic tradition narrates that whoever recites the following words fifteen times , " La ilaha il Allaho haqqan haqqan la ilaha il Allaho eemanan wa tasdeeqan la ilaha il Allaho uboodiyatan wa riqqan", allah will have a Bounteous look towards him and till the person enters the precincts of the Heaven, He will have an eye of Blessing on him.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) narrates that if a person recites the following invocation ten times every day, " Ashaduan la ilaha il Allahu wahdahu la sharika lahu ilahan wahedan samadan lam yattakhezu sahebatunwa la waladan", his record of deeds will get entry of forty five thousand virtuous deeds and delete the record of forty five thousand bad deeds. To the same extent the person's status would be elevated..
- In another narration it is said that this invocation would save him from the machinations of the Satan on the Day of Judgement. He will be pardoned for the major sins committed by him. He will get the reward for reciting the complete Quran ten times and would also get a place in the Heaven.

3.THE SUPERIORITY OF TASBEEH OR THE ROSARY

- Imam Jafare Sadiq (a.s.) says that when a *momin* says " Subhan Allah wa behamdehi subhan Allahil azeem wa behamdehi", Allah will enter three thousand virtuous deeds in his account and deletes one thousand misdeeds from there. Allah will create a rooster that will repeat this tasbeeh till the Day of Judgement and the reward for this will go to the account of the person.
- Hazrat ameer al Momineen (a.s.) has said that when a person says " Subhan Allah", the angels would pray for him.
- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that one who recites " Subhan Allah wa behamdehi, Subhan Allahil azeem", thirty times, Allah will remove penury and difficulties from him, make him affluent and allot a place for him in the Heaven.
- It is narrated from Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) that when Allah had created the light (*Noor)* of the Prophet (a.s.), He had kept it for twelve thousand years under a curtain, *Hijab e Qudrat*. The *Noor* used to recite the following *Tasbeeh:* " Subhana Rabbial aala wa behamdehi"*,* again for eleven thousand years the *noor* was under a curtain, *Hijab e Azmath,* when it recited the words, Subhana aalamissirre wal khaffiyat, for another ten thousand years the *Noor* was under the *Hijab al Mann* reciting, "Subhana man huwa qayemun laailahu", for another nine thousand years the *Noor* was under the curtain, *Hijab e Rehmat,* when it recited, " Subhan ar rabbi al aala", thereafter the *Noor* was under the curtain, *Hijab al Saadaat,* for eight thousand years and it recited, " Subhana man huwa dayamun la yashuwa", for the next seven thousand years the *Noor* was under the curtain, *Hijab al Karamat,* and recited, " Subhana man huwa ghaniun la yaghfar", for the next six thousand years the *Noor* was under the curtain, *Hijab al Manzila,*when it recited, " Subhan il aleemul kareem", for the next five thousand years the *Noor* was under the curtain, *Hijab al Hidayat,* when it recited, Subhana zil arshil azeem", for the next four thousand years the *Noor* was under the curtain, *Hijab an nabbuwa,* when it recited, "Subhana rabbil izzate amma yasefoon", for the next three thousand years the *Noor* was under the curtain, *Hijab ar rafaa,* when it recited, " Subhana zil mulke wal malakoot", then for the next two thousand years the *Noor* was under the curtain, *Hijab e Haibat,* when it recited,"Subhan allahi wa behamde", finally for one thousand years the *Noor* was under the curtain, *Hijab ash Shafaat,* when it recited, "Subhana Rabbil azeeme wa behamdehi"

4. SUPERIORITY PF TAHMEED OR PRAISING ALLAH

- Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) was asked what act was the best in the consideration of Allah? He replied, " Praising Him!"
- Imam Ali bin Hussain (a.s) said," One who uttered "Al hamdu lillah", he thanked Allah for all His Bounties.
- Hazrat Imam Reza (a.s.) said that the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) has observed that Allah gives His Bounties to a person who remembers and praises Allah. One who experiences delays in getting his sustenance, he should do Asthagfar (seek Allah's forgiveness). If a person is engrossed with difficulties, he should say, " La haula wa la quwwata illa billa".
- Whenever the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) was pleased with anything, he used to say, "Alhamdu lillahil lazi benematehi tatam as saalehaat" and whenever there was a sad event he said "Al hamdu lillahi ala kulle haal".
- Imam Jafare Sadiq (a.s.) has narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) that he used to praise Allah every day. He used to recite, as much as his physical condition permitted, the following words, " Al hamdu lillahi rab il aalameen kateeran ala kulle haal."
- Imam jafar e Sadiq has said that one who says, " Alhamdu lillahi kama huwa ahlehi", the chroniclers of deeds will tell to Allah that they were tiring recording good deeds in his *Nama e Aamaal.* Allah will say, " Write whatever my creature is saying. Leave his record of deeds for Me to update!"

5.THE SUPERIORITY OF ASTAGHFAR-SEEKING ALLAH'S FORGIVENESS

- Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) has said that the smell of sins is warded off by the fragrance of repentence. Seeking Allah's forgiveness (*Astaghfar)* becomes the cause of enhancement of one's sustenance.
- Imam Zain al Abedeen (a.s.) has said that a person who has the habit of saying " Astaghfar Allah Rabbi wa atoobe alaih" will never be proud and conceited.
- Whichever group the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) visited, he used to spend more time in saying the Astaghfar.
- It is narrated that the Prophet of Allah used to say the Astaghfar a hundred times every night, although he was a *Masoom* (innocent) and not susceptible to commit any sins.Therefore, saying Astaghfar in itself is a abig invocation,

whether one has committed any sin or not. Astaghfar is liked by the Creator and His Prophet. (a.s.)..

- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) that when a person commits a sin, he gets a respite of seven hours to repent and seek Allah's forgiveness by saying the Astaghfar three times. If he does this, then the sin will not be entered in his Nama e Aamaal. The Astaghfar is "Astaghfarullah allazi la ilaha illa huwal hai al qayyumo wa atoobu ilaihi."
- Then the Imam (a.s.) said, " Whoever repeats Astaghfar Allah a hundred times in a day, Allah will forgive seven hundred sins of his..Remember, there is no virtue in a person who can commit seven hundred sins in a day!"
- It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) When a *momin* commits forty sins ina day and night, and in repentence recites the following invocation: " Astaghfarullah allazi la ilaha illa huwal haiulqayyumo badeeus samawate walarz zul jalale wal ikrame waasaalahu an yusalli ala muhammadin wa aale muhammadin wa atoobo alayya", then Allah will pardon his sins.

5.MISCELLANEOUS INVOCATIONS

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that he was surprised why a person who is scared of an enemy doesn't recite the following:

Hasbanallaha wa naimal wakeel

Because Allah has said that those who utter these words have acquired a great Bounty.

The Imam (a.s.) was surprised that why people don't recite the following words that Hazrat Yunus (a.s.) recited while he was in the belly of the fish:

La ilaha anta subhanaka inni kunto min azzaalemeen

Because Allah says that He heard the prayer of Yunus and gave him relief from his trouble.

The Imam (a.s.) wondered that when a person's enemies are deceitful against him, he doesn'trecite these words

Ufawwazo amri ilallahi innallaha baseerum bilibaad

Because Allah says, thereafter, that when the *momins* of the Tribe of Pharo recited these words, He protected them from the deceit of their enemies.

The Imam (a.s.) wondered that when a person aspires for wealth and property, why doesn't he recite the following words

Maasha Allaha lahaula wala quwwata illa billahi

Because thereafter, Allah has promised to answer the *momin's* prayers.

One person complained to the Prophet (a.s.) about fears and the burden of debts. The Prophet (a.s.) advised him to recite the following words

Tawakkalto alalhai al lazi la yamooto wal hamdu lillahil lazi lam yattakhizo sahebatan wa la waladan wa lam yakunlahu shareekun filmulke wa lam yakunlahu waliun min azzulle wakabirrehu takbeera

The prophet of Islam (a.s) narrated that Hazrat Adam (a.s.) complained to Allah about fears and uneasiness. Jibrael (a.s.) came and said that if he recited the following words, his fears would vanish

La haula wa la quwwata illa billahi

Also the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) said that Allah will shower His Bounties on a person who recited the words

Al hamdu lillahi rabbil aalameen

The person who is engulfed in sorrow and difficulties should recite

La haula wala quwwata illa billahil alil azeem

The Prophet (a.s..) also said that one Night of *Meraj* Allah has sent the following words through a Revelation

La haula wala quwwata illa billahi wala maljaam minka illa ilaika

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that when a person recites the following words , while offering supplications, his prayers will definitely be answered:

Maasha allaho lahaula wala quwwata illa billahi

The Imam (a.s.) also said when a person recites the following words seven times

Ya arham ar rahemeen

The angels say,' your voice has been heard by the Arham ar Rahemeen and whatever you have wished for will be granted by Him!'

And when a person repeats ten times the words

Ya Allaho

Then Allah says, ' Ask for whatever is required by you!'

Imam Reza (a.s.) said, " When a person is afflicted with difficulties he should continuously recite

Ya Raoofo ya Raheemo

It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) when one recites the verses of

Qul hu walla, Inna anzalna and Ayat al Kursi

Facing the Kaaba, Allah will definitely answer his wishes because these contain the *Ism e Azam* (the ineffable words).

Imam Reza (a.s.) has said the following are Ineffable Words

Ya haiyo ya Qayyum

It is narrated from Imam Ali bin al Hussain (a.s.) that the following supplication is based on Ism e Azam and reciting it will get the prayers answered:

Ya allaho ya Allaho ya Allaho wahdaka wahdaka la shareeka laka antal mannan badius samawaate wal arza zul jalale wal ikraame wazussamail izaame wazul izzallazi la yuramo wa ilahukum ilahun wahedun la ilaha illa huwar Rahman urraheeme wa salallaho ala muhammadin wa aalehi ajmaeen

It is narrated from Sakeen bin Ammar that one night he was asleep in the city of Mecca. He saw a person in the dream asking him to awaken and see that a person was reciting Invocations to Allah. He awoke from the sleep, but fell asleep again. He saw the same dream a second time. He awoke and fell asleep again. When he saw the

dream again , he heard a loud voice saying that Imam Moosa bin Jafar (a.s) reciting the Ism e Azam. . He took a bath, wore fresh clothes and went near the *Hajr e Aswad.* He found a revered person prostrating toward the Kaaba. He went and stood near him. When he heard intently, the following words were audible to him:

Yanooro ya quddooso (three times)
Ya haiyo ya Qayyumo (three times)
Ya haiyo la yamooto (three times)
Ya haiyo heena la haiyo (three times)
Ya haiyo la ilaha illa anta (three times)
Asaloka be-an la ilaha illa anta (three times)

Sikeen says that the Imam (a.s) repeated the words so many times that he could memorise them.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s) says that one who recites the following words will certainly get his prayers answered:

Ya asma as saame eena wa ya absaran naazereena wa ya asraul haasebeena ya arham ar raahemeena wa ya ahkamul haakemeena

7.THE TIMINGS FOR SPECIAL INVOCATIONS

THE INVOCATIONS AFTER THE MANDATORY PRAYERS OF THE MORNINGS AND EVENINGS

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s) narrates that when you have finished the evening (*Maghrib)* prayer, then without talking to anyone, say the following a hundred times:

Bismillahir Rahmaan ir Raheem la haula wa la quwwata illa billahil ali il azeem

Do the same after the morning (*Fajr)* prayers. Allah will ward away a hundred evils from you because there is *Ism e Azam* in these words.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s) has said, “ when a person recites the following ten times before the sunrise and before the sunset every day, all his sins committed on that day will be pardoned:

La ilaha il Allaho wahdahu la shareeka lahu lahul mulko wa lahul hamdo yohi wa yumeeto wa yohi wa huwa hayyun la yamooto be yadahil khaire wa huwa ala kulle shaiyin qadeer

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said, " One who recites the Salawat on Mohammed and his progeny ten times at dawn and repeats the following words

Subhan Allah (35 times)
La ilaha il Allah (35 times)
Alhamdu lillah (35 times)

And repeats the same at dusk, then he will be counted as those who are busy supplicating to Allah throughout the day. And one who says allaho Akbar a hundred times at dawn and at dusk, he will get Reward equal to releasing a hundred slaves.

It is narrated that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) used to revite three hundred and sixty times every dawn and dusk the following

Alhamdu lillahi rabbilaalimeen kateeran ala kulle haalin

He (a.s.) said that there are 360 veins in the human body. Of them 180 are mobile and the other 180 are static. If, even one mobile vein becomes static, or any of the static veins becomes mobile, then the person doesn't get the sleep and remains restless the whole night. He should therefore regularly recite the invocation mentioned above.

It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) that one should recite the following invocation in the mornings:

Asbahto billahi moomenan ala deene Muhammadin wa sunnatehi wa deenil ausiae wa sunnatehim aamanto besirrehim wa alniyatehim wa shahedehim wa
ghayebehim wa aaoozu billahi mimma asta aaza minhu rasoolillahi sal allaho alaihi wa aalehi wa alal ausiyae salawaat ullahi alaihim wa arghub ilallahi feeha raghebu ilaihi wa la haula wa la quwwata illa billahi.

It is also narrated from the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) that one who recites the following supplication before the sunrise, an angel will take it on its wings and go to the Firmament . When it arrives there, the other angels ask him what it was carrying. It says that it was carrying the supplication of a *momin.* The angels then pray to Allah for the acceptance of the *momin's supplication.* Similarly all the angels and the people of the Firmament will pray on his behalf. This supplication is treasured with the record of the good deeds of the *Momin.*

Allaho akbar Allaho akbar kabeeran wa subhan allahi bukratan wa aseela walhamdulillahi rabbil aalameena kateeran la shareeka lahu wa salallaho ala Mohammedin wa aalehi.

Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) used to recite the following supplication thrice every morning. Allah used to keep him safe from all calamities the whole day:

Asbahto wa rabbi mahmoodan asbahto la shareeka billahi shaiyan wa la adau maallahi ilahan wa la attakhaza min doonehi waliyyan

It is narrated from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s) that before talking to anyone in the morning, one should recite the Sura e Qadr and blow on the Aqeeq stone (cornelian) and then recite the following supplication:

Aamanto billahi wahdahu la shareeka lahu wa kafarto biljibte wat taghoote wa aamanto besirre aale Mohammedin wa alaniyatehim wa zaherehim wa batinehim wa awwalehim wa aakhirehim

Then Allah will save him from all calamities that day.

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It is narrated from Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) that anyone who recites the following verse three times at the time of *Maghrib* prayer, till the next morning he will not suffer any loss and he will be safe from natural calamities:

Fa subhan allahi heena tumsoona wa heena tusbehoona wa lahul hamdo fis samawaate wal arze wa ashi an wa heena tuzheroona – 30.18

Hazrat Ameer al Momineen has said that anyone who recited three times the following words every morning and evening, then Allah will certainly enter him into the Heaven:

Razaito billahi rabban wa bilislame deenan wa Muhammadin sal allaho alaihi wa aalehi nabian wa bil qurane balaghan wa be aliyin imaman wa bil ausiayo min wuldehe aayimatan

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that one who recites the following words 25 times every day, then Allah will write one virtue in the names of all the *momins* from Adam (a.s.) till the Day of Reckoning and to that individual he will Reward equal to that of all the *momins:*

Allahumma aghfiru lilmomineena wal mominaate wal muslimeena wal muslimaate

Halqam asked Imam Jafare Sadiq (a.s.) , ‘ Ya Ibne Rasool Allah (a.s)! Teach me a supplication that will be beneficial for me now and also in the Hereafter.” The Imam said, “ After the *Fajr* prayer, till the dawn, recite the following:

Subhan allahil azeeme wa behamdehe astaghfirallaha wa asalahu min fazlehi

8.SUPPLICATIONS AFTER EVERY MANDATORY PRAYER

In the supplications to be recited after eyery mandatory prayer, the best is the *Tasbeeh e Fatima (a.s.).* It requires reciting:

Allaho Akbar (34 times)
Alhamdu lillah (33 times)
Subhan Allah (33 times)

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said that after every mandatory prayer, there is no better invocation than the Tasbeeh e Fatima (a.s.). If there was any other, more effective, way of Praising Allah, the Prophet (a.s.) would most certainly haveinstructed his daughter about that.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq has said that reciting the Tasbeeh e Fatima (a.s.) after every compulsory prayer is better than performing a thousand genuflections. One should say once after reciting the Tasbeeh the following words:

La ilaha il Allah

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) has said, One who sits quietly after each mandatory prayer and recites thrice the following words, Allah will pardon all his sins:

Astaghfarallah allazi la ilaha illa huwal hayyal qayyumo zuljalal e wal ikraame wa aatube ilaihi

Imam Jafar e Sadiq has said that if a person recites thirty times the following words after each compulsory prayer, all his sins will be pardoned:

Subhan Allah

It is narrated from Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) if one desires to depart from this world as innocent as he was at his birth, then he should recite the Sura e Iqlaas twelve times after every compulsory prayer and then raise his hands towards the sky and recite the following invocation:

Allahumma inni asaloka beismekal maknoone wal makhzoonil tahiril tuhharil mubarake wa asaloka beismekal azeeme wa sultanekal qadeeme ya waheb al ataya wa ya mutleqal usaara wa ya fakkakar riqaabe min an naare asaloka anto salle ala Mohammedin wa alle Mohammadin wa an tuteqa raqbati minan naare wa an tuqrijani min ad duniya aamenan wa an tudqilunil jannata salemun wa an tajal duaee awwalahu falahan wa awsatahu najahan wa aakhirahu salahan innaka anta allamul ghayoobo

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Imam Reza (a.s.) was asked about the method of offering salutations to the Prophet (a.s.) and his *Ahl al Bayt (a.s.)* after the mandatory prayers. The Imam (a.s) asked one to say the following:

As salaam alaika ya rasool allah wa rahmat ullahi wa barakatahu ya Mohammed bin Abdallah as salaamu alaika ya khairatillahe as salaamualaika ya Habeeb Allah as salaamualaika ya sifwat allahi as salaamualaika ya ameenallahi ashadu annaka Rasool allahi wa ashaduannaka Muhammad ibne Abdallahi wa ashaduannaka qad nashata leummeka wa jahadta fi sabeele rabbaka wa abdutahu hatta ataakal yaqeena fajazaakallaha ya rasool Allahi afzala ma jazaee nabiyan ummehi alla

humma salle ala Muhammadin wa aale muhammedin afzale ma sallaita ala Ibraheema innaka hameedun majeed.

It is narrated from Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that after every mandatory prayer he continued sitting at the place of the prayer till he cursed four accursed men andfour accursed women of the *ummat.*:

9.INVOCATIONS AFTER ZUHR PRAYER

It is narrated from Hazrat Ali (a.s.) that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) used to recite the following supplication after the *Zuhr* prayer.

La ilaha il allahul azeemul haleemo la ilaha il allaho rabil arsh il kareeme wal hamdu lillahi rabbil aalameen allahumma inni asalaka mujebaate rahmateka wa aza ame maghfirateka wal ghanimata min kulle khairin was salamata min kulle ismin allahumma la tad aa li zunban illa ghafartahu wa la hamman illa farjataha wa la suqaman illa shafatahu wa la aiban illa satartahu wa la rizqan illa bastatahu wa la khaufan illa aminatahu wa la sau an illa saraftahu wa la hajjatan hiya laka rizzan waliya fiha salahun illa qazaitaha ya arham ar raahemeen

10.THE SUPPLICATION AFTER ASR PRAYER

Imam jafar e Sadiq has said that a person who says Asthgfar seventy time after the Asr prayer, Allah will pardon his seven hundred sins. If he doesn't have so many sins in his account, Allah will pardon the sins of his parents or other relatives.

The Prophet of Allah (a.s.) has said that the person who recites Astaghfar once after the Asr prayer, Allah will forgive all his sins. The Astaghfar is as follows

Astaghfirallahallazi la ilaha illa huwal haiul qayyumur Rehmanur Raheemu zuljalale wal ikrame wa asaalahu an yatooba alaiyya taubata abdin zaleelin khazein faqeerin baessin miskeenin mustajeerin la yamleku lenafsehi nafan wa la zarran wa la mautan wa la hayatan wa la nushura:

11.THE INVOCATIONS AFTER THE LATE NIGHT PRAYERS

Imam Mohammed Taqi (a.s.) has said that one who recites the verse Inna anzalna after the mandatory maghribain prayers, he will remain in the care of Allah till the morning.

Sheik Toosi has said that after the late night prayer (*namaz e Shab)* one should recite ten times Surat al Fateha, Sura Qul huwalla, Sura Qul auzu berabbil naas, Sura Qul auzu Berabbil falaq. Also recite ten times Tasbeehaat e Arba and the Salawat.

11. SAJDA E SHUKR- THE PROSTRATION OF THANKSGIVING

Prostration of thanksgiving after every mandatory prayer was the practice (*Sunnat e Muwakkida*) of the Prophet (a.s.).

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has hinted at it's being mandatory and said that when a person makes a prostration of thanksgiving, Allah addresses the angels and tells them that a sincere creature is doing the *Sajda e Shukr.* He asks the angels to suggest what Reward must be given to the person. The angels would suggest that Allah keep His Blessings with the person for his act. Allah will again ask them what else should be the Reward for the person? The angels say,' O Sustainer! Give him a place in the Heaven!' Allah will again ask the angels,' What else?' The angels reply, ' O Allah! Give a place in the Heaven for the person's parents and children, as well!' Allah will again ask the angels to suggest some more Reward for the person. The angels would reply,' We have made suggestions to the best of our knowledge! We have nothing else to suggest! You know everything!' Then Allah would say,' The person has thanked Me in all sincerity and humility, therefore, in return, I too shall thank him!'

Imam Reza (a.s.) has said that while making the prostration of thanksgiving, a person should say Shukran lillah atleast three times. Also he should say a hundred times Afwan or Shukran. Either in prostration he should first say a hundred times Afwan or Al-afu Al-afu. Then he should keep the right cheek at the place of prostration and s make any supplication as, for example, Ya Allaho, Ya Rabbaho, Ya Syedaho. Similarly he should keep his left cheek at the place of prostration and say the same words. In the end he should place his forehead at the same spot and repeat Shukran Shukran ya Shukran Allah a hundred times.

Remember that this prostration is not a part of the mandatory prayer. This is only a *sunnat.* While doing this, the person should place his chest and the tummy on the ground, spread his arms and keep his kness flat on the ground. He should pray for the welfare of himself and all the *momineen* with tearful eyes. Allah likes his creatures imploring Him for help in this manner.

Our Imams (a.s.) used to make long prostrations of thanksgiving. Specially Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) used to do the *sajda* after completing his *fajr* prayer which stretched well

into the sun up. When he was asked about his *Sajda e Shukr,* the Imam (a.s.) said, one should recite the following supplication while doing the *Sajda:*

Allahumma inni ashaduka wa ashadu malaekateka wa ambiyaeka wa rusuleka wa jamieh qalkeka annaka allaho rabbi wal islamo deeni wa Muhammadan nabiee wa Aliyan wal Hassane wal Hussaine wa Ali ibnal Hussaine wa Mohammed ibne aliyyin wa Jafar ibne Mohammedin wa Moosa ibne Jafar wa Ali ibne Moosa wa Mohammed ibne Aliyyin wa Ali ibne Mohammedin wal Hassan ibne Aliyyin wal Hujjata ibnal Hassane ayyimmati behim atwallah wa min aadayehim atabbara

Then the person should recite Shukran a hundred times and also say the Salawat.

Afterwards he should say thrice:

Allahumma inni unshudaka dam al mazloom

Then repeat the following thrice as well:

Allahumma inni unsheduka bayuaayeka ala nafseka leaadayeka letuhlaknahum beaidiana wa aidial momineena allahumma inni ansheduka beyuaieka ala nafseka leauliyaeka letuzfera behim beaduweka wa aduwwehim antusalle ala Mohammedin wa alal mustahfezeena min aale Mohammedin

Then he should recite the following thrice:

Allahumma inni asalukal yusra baadal usre

Then he should keep his right cheek at the place of prostration and repeat thrice the following:

Ya kahufi heena tuainil mazahiba wa tuzeeqa alalarze bema rahubato wa ya berabbia khalqi rahmata bee wa kunto min qalqi ghaniyan salle ala Mohammedin wa alal mustahfezeena min aale Mohammedin

Then the left cheek is kept at the place of prostration and the following words recited thrice:

Ya muzillo kullo jabbarin ya muizzo kulle zaleelin qad izzateka balagh bee majuhoori.

In one narration it is said that the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) used to recite the following while doing the prostration of thanksgiving:

Aauzubeka min naarin harreha la yutfa wa aaoozubeka min naarin jadeeduha la yubla wa aauzubeka min naarin utusanuha la yuruwayee wa aaoozubeka min naarin masukubaha la yuksa

It is narrated that Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) used to recite the following supplication while doing the *Sajda e Shukr:*

Irhamo zulli baina yadaika wa tazurrai ilaika wa wahshati minan naase wa unsa beka ya kareem

13.THE SUPPLICATIONS BEFORE GOING TO BED

Before sleeping it is advisable to do the ablution. . One should sleep on the right arm. And keep the face towards the *Kaaba.* It is better to recite the *Tasbeeh e Fatima* before going to bed that he doesn't get disturbing dreams.

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that before going to bed one should recite the sura Inna anzalna eleven times and also sura Iqlas eleven times. One who does this, will be pardoned his sins during the next fifty years. If someone sees disturbing dreams, he should recite the maoozatain, that is, Qul aaoozo berabbil falaq & Qul aaoozo Berabbil Naas before going to bed.

Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) says that when one turns in the bed, he should say:

Alhamdu lillah wallaho akbar

Imam Jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) has said that when a person wishes to wake up at a particular time in the night, he should recite the following before going to bed:

Allahumma la tansa zikraka wa la tumani makruka wa la tajalni min al ghafeleena wa anabbehuni leuhibbul saa aate ilaika adooka fiha

fatastajeebo li wa asaluka fatuhtaini wa astaghferuka fataghfirli innahu la egferul zunooba illa anta ya arham ar rahemeen

Janab Syed Taoos has quoted from Imam jafar e Sadiq (a.s.) that if a *momin* wishes to see the Prophet (a.s.) in his dream, then after the Isha prayer he should take a bath of purification, offer four genuflections of prayer and in each of these genuflections he should he should recite Sura Hamd once and Ayat al Kursi a hundred times. After the prayer he should offer Durood on the Prophet (a.s.) and His Holy Progeny (a.s.) a thousand times. The person then should sleep in a dress free of any impurity. He should keep his right hand under his head while lying down to sleep and say a hundred times:

Subhan allah wal hamdu lillah wa la ilaha il Allaho wallaho akbar wa la haula wala quwwata illa billah

And he should say a hundred times these words before sleeping:

Masha Allah

He will witness the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) in his dream.

And if a person wishes to see Hazrat Ameer al Momineen (a.s.) in his dream, he should recite the following supplication before going to bed:

Allahumma inni asaluka ya man lahu lutfun khafiun wa ayadaihe basitatun la tanquzi asoluka belutfekal khafi allazi ma latafta behi leabdil akfa an turiani maulaya ameeralmomineena fi manayaa

:If someone wishes to see a dead and departed relative in his dream, he should do the ablution, recite the Tasbeeh e Fatima, and then recite the following invocation

Allahumma antal haiul lazi la yusafo wal eemano la yorafo minhu minka badatil ashiyaya wa ilaika taoodu fama aqbalo minha kunta maljahu wa manhaho wa ma adbara minha lamyakun lahu manjaaan wa la manja minka illa ilaika wal eemaano fasaluka bila ilaha illa anta wa asaloka bebismillahir rahman ir Raheem wa behaqqe habeebeka mohammedin sal allaho alaihi wa aalehi wa sallama syed in nabiyeena wa behaqqe alliyin syed il wasiyeena wa behaqqe fatimata syedate nisail aalameena wa behaqqil hassane wal Hussainil lazeena jaaltahuma

syedi shababa ahlal Jannata alaihim ajmayeenas salaamo an to salla ala Muhammadinwa aale Muhammadin wa an turaini mubbani fi haalal lati huwa alaiha

Amongst the most popular supplications is the Namaz e Ameer al Momineen. This requires one to offer four genuflections of prayer and two salaams (benedictions). In every genuflection (*Rakat)* after reciting the Sura e Fateha one should recite the Sura e Ahad fifty times. When a person completes this prayer, all his sins would have been pardoned by Allah!

Alhamdu lillahi ala ahsana wa karmah.

THE END